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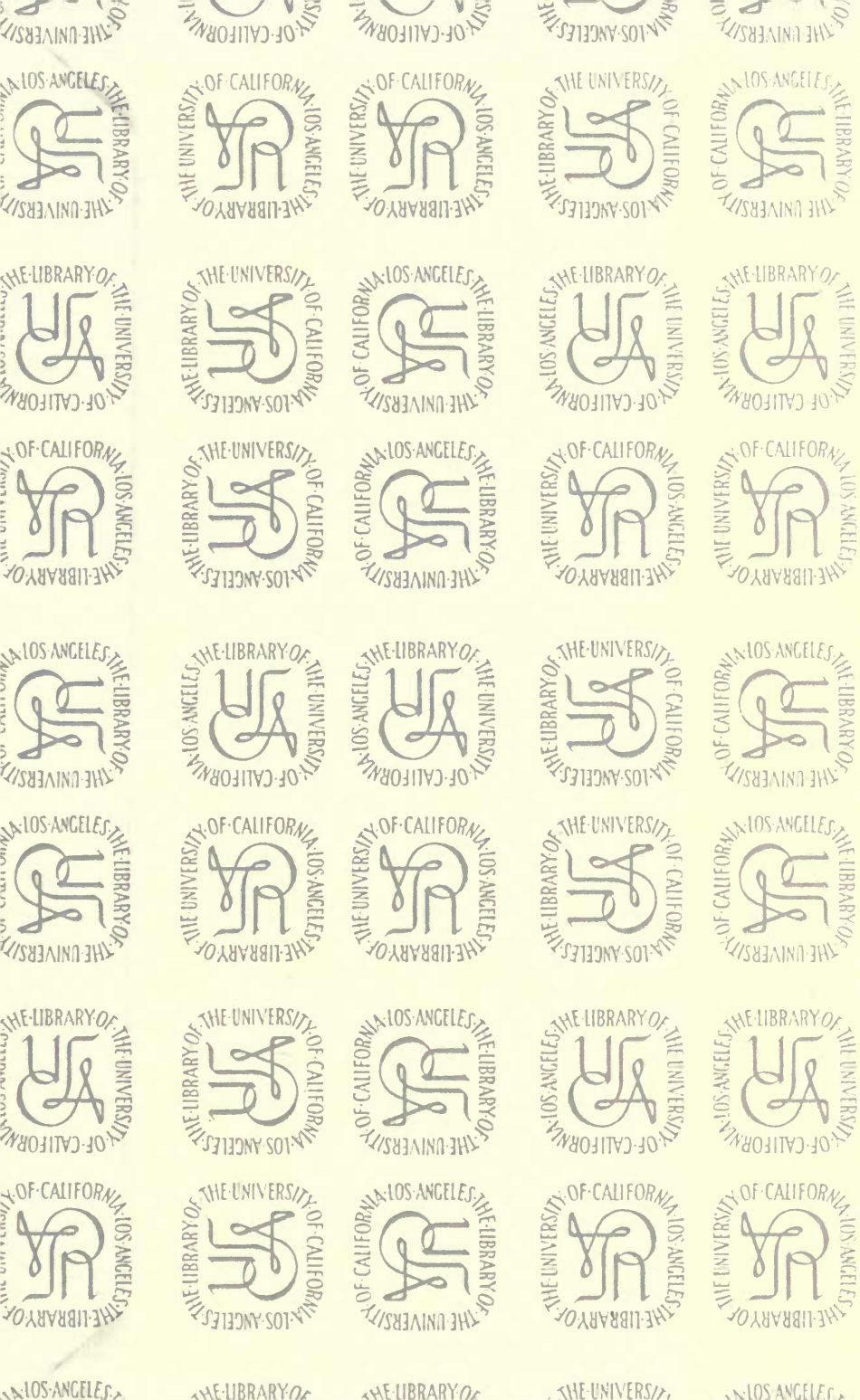
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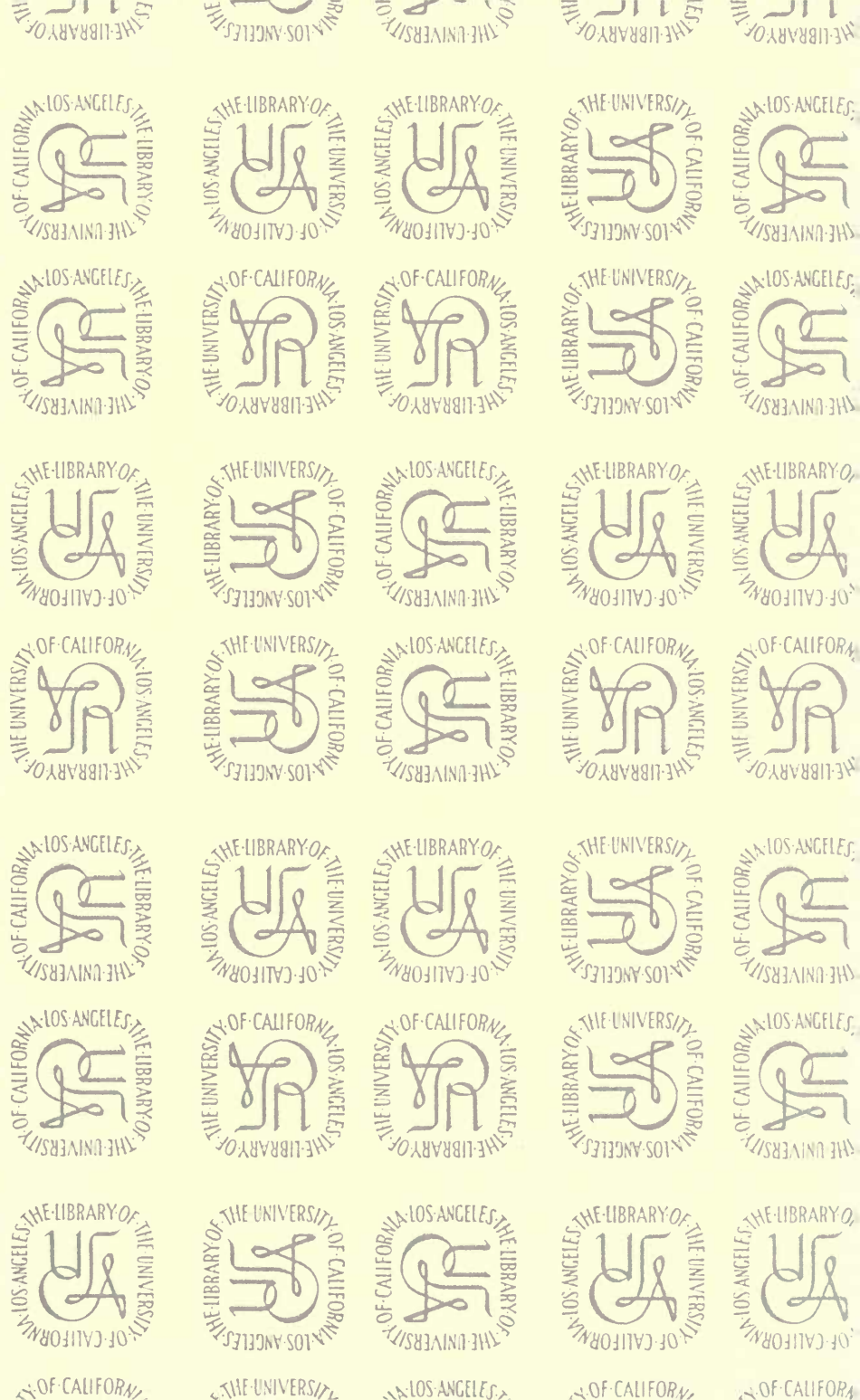
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Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement.

THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

OF

The Atonement:

AN HISTORICAL INQUIRY INTO ITS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CHURCH.

With an Introduction on the Principle of Theological Developments.

BY

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FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"Non mors sed voluntas placuit sponte morientis."

S. BERNARD.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, AND GREEN.

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T. AND G. SHRIMPTON, OXFORD.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

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PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF MUNICH,

PROVOST OF THE CHAPEL ROYAL, ETC., ETC.,

This Volume,

COMMENCED AT HIS SUGGESTION,

AND OWING MUCH TO OPPORTUNITIES OF INTERCOURSE

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IS, WITH HIS PERMISSION,

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IN TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR MANY KINDNESSES,

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PREFACE.

THE scope of this Essay is not controversial, but historical. It is designed to trace through the patristic, scholastic, and later periods of theology the Catholic doctrine on the Atonement of the Son of God, comparing it also with the principal Reformed systems, to some of which the author ventures to think that the antipathy felt by many not irreligious minds towards the whole idea of Atonement is in great measure due. He has had, therefore, a certain undercurrent of practical aim, in showing that objections urged with more or less reason against what are either doubtful excrescences or erroneous perversions of the doctrine do not apply to it, as part of the Church's faith. But this secondary purpose has never been allowed (he trusts) to interfere with strict fidelity of statement in recording the belief whether of individuals or communities.

References are in every case given to the writers or formularies under review, and their meaning is expressed, as far as possible, in their own words.

Of authorities consulted, other than those forming the direct subject of inquiry, the following deserve special mention; for the Fathers of the first three centuries, Bähr's *Die Lehre der Kirche vom Tode Jesu in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Sulzbach, 1832), Thomasius' *Origenes. Ein Beitrag zur Dogmengeschichte des dritten Jahrhunderts* (Nürnberg, 1837), Redepenning's *Origenes. Eine Darstellung seines Lebens und seiner Lehre* (Bonn, 1841); for the later patristic and the scholastic period especially, and partly for the Reformation, Baur's *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung* (Tübingen, 1838);* for the patristic period generally, Petavius *De Incarnatione Verbi*, Thomassin *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei*, Fabricius *De Veritate Religionis Christianæ*, cap. 41; and for the Reformation period Möhler's *Symbolism* (Robertson's Trans., London, 1843), Döllinger's *Die Reformation* (Regensburg, 1848), vol. iii., and Newman's *Lectures on Justification* (Oxford, 1840). Other authorities will be men-

* Baur's work requires to be read with caution. He is on the whole reliable as a chronicler of opinions, but with a passion for *systematizing*, which sometimes leads him to give exclusive or disproportionate value to one side of a writer's view, to the exclusion or neglect of others. This is particularly shown in his treatment of the Fathers.

tioned, as they occur. The author desires further to put on record his great personal obligations to the kindness of Dr. Döllinger, both for many valuable suggestions, and for allowing him the free use of his extensive library.

It may be as well to observe, that the manuscript was completed before he had an opportunity of referring to Archbishop Thomson's Bampton Lectures on the Atonement, which he had heard preached at Oxford in 1853, but had not seen in print; only two of them, however—the sixth and seventh—deal in part, and from the nature of the case very briefly, with the *history* of the doctrine. As a general rule, direct criticism on contemporary literature has been purposely avoided in this volume, as unsuitable to the character of a work not meant to be controversial; but it has not therefore been composed in forgetfulness of what living writers have said, or of the tone of the serial press on the subject. The treatise is chiefly occupied with recording the opinions of others; so far as it expresses his own, the author need scarcely add, that he trusts it will be found to contain nothing out of harmony with the spirit and teaching of the Church.

Lent, 1865.

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INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS.

It can hardly be doubted, that one of the most important theological questions of the day, on which many of our detailed controversies will be found to hinge, and into which they must ultimately be resolved, is that of developments in Christian belief. From failing to recognize this great law of revealed as of scientific truth, thousands are prejudiced against dogmatic Christianity altogether, while others hold it with but a feeble and uncertain grasp. Nor can we look with any confidence for the return to unity of separated religious bodies, while some rigidly adhere to the principle of a lifeless and unfruitful tradition, and others insist on an exclusive appeal to the bare letter of Scripture. This question will accordingly be found, if I mistake not, to lie at the root of half our religious disputes, and some understanding upon it is an indispensable preliminary for their appreciation or adjustment.

There is of course a broad line to be drawn between matters of faith, and of theological opinion, between what is put be-

fore us as a portion of the revealed deposit, and what may be reasonably, or probably, or piously believed as an inference from it. But there are also theological inferences, which come to be so clearly ascertained in the course of ages, that they are at length fixed by authoritative decisions, and accepted as part of the original revelation, which, though not explicitly contained in the words of Apostles and Evangelists, is felt to be involved in the general scope of their teaching, and to supply the right key for its harmonious interpretation.

It is natural, then, to prefix to a work occupied with tracing the history of a particular doctrine some observations on this principle of growth and development in Catholic theology, though all that can be attempted within our present limits is to sketch out roughly some main outlines of thought on the subject. And as the method of my Treatise is not controversial but historical, so it will be my aim in this Introductory chapter to speak as little controversially as the subject admits. A statement of principles cannot be made too clear, but it is never less persuasive than when thrown into a polemical shape. Most earnestly would I desire to take for my motto in all that I may say that noble maxim of Christian antiquity, which, if not verbally stated in the works of St. Augustine, has ever been held to express the mind of that great Saint and Teacher in the Church of God; *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*

The development of doctrine, it can hardly be needful to observe, does *not* mean that there is a constant succession of fresh revelations in the Church to supplement or to supersede

the revelations of Christmas and Pentecost. Still less does it mean, as others have objected, that Christian doctrine receives, as time goes on, a series of fresh accessions, from the admixture or fusion of heterogeneous elements. Let me illustrate my meaning by an example. Supposing, as has sometimes been maintained, that the invocation of Saints had originally sprung from a gradual adoption of polytheistic practices, as the converted heathen began to multiply and dominate in the Church, instead of being the natural outgrowth of a deeper view of the Incarnation; or suppose, as others have urged, that the doctrine of the Trinity was imported from Neo-Platonism into the Gospel;—that would, in either case, be an *accretion*, but not a true development. What *is* meant is simply this—that the Christian revelation once, and once for all, 'delivered to the Saints,' through the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, and from the lips of His inspired servants, though fully apprehended from the first for all necessary ends, has grown, and was intended to grow, by degrees on the consciousness of the Church, illumined by the abiding presence of the Divine Comforter.

In the process of development, as in Scripture, in sacraments, and in everything which concerns our relations with the unseen world, there must be two factors, an earthly and a divine.* The human element is here supplied by the labours of theologians, the meditations of Saints, and even by the external, perhaps antagonistic, speculations of men of

* On the combination of divine and human elements in the Church, see Möhler's *Symbolism*, Pt. I. ch. v. sect. 36.

science, men of the world, heretics and unbelievers.* All these last are in truth unconsciously serving a common end, as the Gibeonites of old were 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' to the chosen people, whom they hated or despised. Those opposite tendencies of the Eastern and Western mind, which have made ancient Greece the mistress of speculative philosophy, and Rome the fountain of law even for modern Europe, reappear in the history of Christian theology. To the one it was given to investigate the revealed nature and attributes of God, to the other His purposes and His gifts for man. Thus, again, theology took its rise in the third century at Alexandria, the centre alike of the Neo-Platonist revival and of Gnosticism, and had something to learn from both; while afterwards, the accidental introduction, as men count accident, of Aristotle's writings into mediæval Europe by the Crusaders, in an Arabian translation, was the immediate origin of scholasticism, which, beginning with St. Anselm, shaped through four centuries the whole theology of Christendom. And thus, to use the words of a high authority, "gradually, and in the course of ages, Catholic inquiry has taken certain

* I subjoin all the more readily the following apposite passage from the *Commonitorium* of St. Vincent of Lerins, as his famous *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, has been frequently, but most incorrectly, quoted, in opposition to the theory of development altogether. "Nullusne ergo in Ecclesia Christi profectus habebitur religionis? *Habeatur plane et maximus.* Nam quis ille est tam invidus hominibus, tam exosus Deo, qui istud prohibere conetur? Sed ita *ut vere profectus sit ille fidei, non permutatio.* Siquidem ad profectum pertinet ut in semet ipsum unaquœque res amplificetur; ad permutationem vero ut aliquid ex alio in aliud transvertatur. Crescat igitur oportet, et multo vehementerque proficiat, tam singulorum quam omnium, tam unius hominis quam totius Ecclesiæ, ætatum et sœculorum gradibus, intelligentia, sapientia, scientia: sed in suo duntaxat genere, eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia."

definite shapes, and has thrown itself into the form of a science, with a method and a phraseology of its own, under the intellectual handling of great minds, such as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas." As a matter of fact, there is probably no single case where the process of doctrinal formation has not been more or less directly promoted by the questionings of heresy. Truth is struck out from the clash of conflicting opinions, to be fixed by theological science, and finally ratified by the sentence of the Church.* And this brings us to the second stage in the course of development. So far many would agree with us, who will differ, when we come to the divine or supernatural element in the process, which is supplied in the Church by the continual guidance of the Holy Ghost, and preserves her in the last resort from giving her authoritative sanction to any development not in accordance with the original revelation and the mind of God. Whether that sanction be expressed through the medium of a Council, as in the case of the ὁμοούσιος, or directly ascertained through

* "There are those indeed who seem as though they would be glad to divest themselves of the advantage of such decisions. They would rather fall back on the unreflecting simplicity of that early faith, which rested only on the single facts of the Gospel. But this is to be ignorant, that the gradual expansion of Christian doctrines was only the growth of the religious mind as, under the moulding power of the Holy Ghost, it compared the individual truths with which it had been entrusted. *Those truths must have resolved themselves into wrong combinations if they had not been resolved into right ones.* ..... Those who seek to regain it (early simplicity of faith) by throwing away what was earned by the religious impulse then given to the age, do but restore the imbecility of childhood without its innocence."—Wilberforce's *Doctrine of the Incarnation*, p. 129. This development during the early ages, as regards the formation of the Canon, is traced by Mr. Westcott in his *Bible in the Church* (Macmillan, 1864), only he does not seem to recognize the similar operation of the 'divine instinct' of the later Church.

the *sensus fidelium*, as with the Athanasian Creed, or by the voice of the Holy See, as with the recent definition of the Immaculate Conception, is immaterial to my present argument; nor need any question be raised here as to the proper organ of its utterance; I am simply concerned with the result. Such, then, is a brief statement of the theory; the chief objections which have been urged against it will be noticed by and by. My present object is rather to explain than to defend it.

First, then, I observe, what is obvious, that the gradual development of Christian doctrine is analogous to the development of Christian history. The grain of mustard seed, which was to grow into a mighty tree, is emblematic alike of the revelation of Christ, and of the Church He established with His Blood. As the one was to expand from a 'hidden sect in the bosom of Judaism,' like an unborn child in its mother's womb, into a 'world-Church,' a 'world-kingdom,' coextensive with the nations of the earth; so too was the original deposit of 'facts, principles, dogmatic germs, and intimations,' afterwards summarized in the Apostles' Creed, not a mere 'lifeless possession ready-made for all times to be taken care of,' but a κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ destined to expand, through the toil of successive ages, and the corporate consciousness of the faithful enlightened from on high, into all the majestic fulness and coherence of Catholic theology.* There was to be a growth, incessant, but with no break of continuity, *continuo non vero per saltum*, alike in the Church's intellectual consciousness and her or-

* Döllinger's *Christenthum und Kirche in der Zeit der Grundlegung*, pp. 162-164, 219-221.

ganic life. The office and authority of the Holy See were recognized with growing distinctness, as the practical importance of a visible centre of unity became apparent in the clash of conflicting interests and diverse nationalities at work within the common fold; and so, too, successive theological controversies were the providential means of bringing out in detail the due 'proportion' and harmony of the faith. The fulness of truth was wrapped up in the apostolic tradition, the world-wide religion lay hid in the upper room at Jerusalem, as the results of mathematical science are involved in its axioms, or the oak is contained in the acorn.

And, next, we may trace a certain historical sequence in the evolution of doctrines running parallel to the order of the Creed. First, in the contest with Greek philosophy, the doctrine of the Trinity had to be evolved and fixed, and this mainly occupied the two first Œcumenical Councils; the four next were engaged in formulizing and guarding the faith of the Incarnation; the first definition on the Eucharist occurs in the seventh (787, A.D.) Later on, and in the West, the subjective questions of grace and free will, first mooted by St. Augustine, and their mutual relations in the justification of man (involving the doctrine of 'merit,' so strangely misunderstood afterwards) presented themselves to the mind of the Church; as also the theology of the sacraments, in their nature, number, and distinguishing characteristics. The results of her judgment on all these points found a luminous exposition in the Catechism and decrees of Trent, from which the later doctrinal symbols of the Greek Church do not materially differ. It was in the subjective side of their theology that the strength

of the Reformers chiefly lay. Luther desired to shift the verdict from the Synod, and the lecture-room, and the cloister, and to make his appeal direct to the hearts and experiences of mankind. He questioned them, not of the nature or mission of the Redeemer, but of how the sinner is made just before God. The controversies of our own day turn principally on the last division of the Creed, which deals with the Person and Offices of the Holy Ghost, and concern more especially His inspiration of Scripture, and His abiding Presence in the Church. What the Protestant movement was to the sixteenth century, that is the Rationalistic movement to our own.

I observe further, that, if the principle of development be denied, only two theories remain on which any positive scheme of Christian doctrine can be maintained; first, that laid down by Chillingworth, and accepted in name, but rejected in practice, by nearly all Protestant communities, 'The Bible, and the Bible alone, the religion of Protestants.' On the actual results of this theory, when fairly carried out, I shall have something to say, in another connection, hereafter. Suffice it to remark here, that, when attempted to be reduced to practice for corporate purposes, it is obliged to *assume* at starting so much of the Catholic principle as will cover the authenticity and inspiration of the Bible, and also some particular scheme of interpretation; if either of these postulates be denied, the theory falls to the ground as a basis for any definite form of belief.* In the abstract, however, it is intelligible and coherent. The other theory in fact, though

* This inconsistency of Protestant systems is dwelt upon in Mackay's *Tubingen School and its Antecedents*. London, 1863.

not in words, admits the *principle* of development, but seeks to limit its operation to the early ages. According to this latter, we ought to accept not only the Bible, but the Catholic creeds—*i. e.*, the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian—together with the dogmatic decrees of the earlier Councils, and the judgment of the early Church on the Canon of Scripture, rejecting all later developments, or as they would be called 'innovations,' such as Purgatory or the Double Procession. This principle is professed by the Church of England, and, with more rigid consistency, by the Greek Church, and is acted upon in various degrees, though disclaimed in theory, by the principal Protestant communities of Europe. It has an advantage over the former, or purely Bible theory, in providing, up to a certain point, a definite system of belief; but it is deficient in applicability to fresh circumstances, and in internal coherence. For the question at once occurs, *Where are we to draw the line?* Theological science cannot come to a standstill, and if we are bound to accept the definitions of Nice and Chalcedon, why are we to reject the decrees of later Councils? If the *sensus fidelium* is enough to guarantee the Athanasian dogmas, and (in the Anglican Church) the *Filioque*, why is it inadequate to guarantee the Invocation of Saints, or Purgatory? The Holy Ghost, who guided the Church during the earlier ages, cannot be supposed to have withdrawn His illuminating gifts; and, since the new forms and varied resources of error are confined to no one particular period, so neither should be the Church's capabilities for meeting them, if need be, by fresh definitions, and a fuller exhibition of that portion of revealed truth which happens to be assailed. We

can understand there being no development at all—that is the 'Bible only' theory; but it is not easy to understand (if I may be allowed to borrow a political formula) development with a principle of finality. We cannot, with the Danish monarch of old, say to the rising spring tide, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther." If the stream once began to flow, we clearly have a right to ask *where* it was dammed up, and *why*. That this difficulty is something more than a mere intellectual puzzle is shown by the fact, that both the Greek and Anglican Churches *have* had to frame new formulas since the division, and will appear further when we come to speak of the modern rationalistic school. It may suffice to suggest it here.

There have no doubt been those in other days, when history was less studied and criticism almost unknown, who have supposed, that all now taught as Catholic doctrine could be discovered in the writings of the early Fathers. Such a view is no longer held by any well-informed man. It is becoming daily clearer, that the real question is, not whether such and such details of doctrine are or are not developments (for the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Confession of Augsburg are no less a development than the Creed of Pius IV.), but what are the right developments. This is quite understood by Protestant divines in Germany of the more orthodox, as well as of the rationalist school, no less than by Catholic writers.* And it involves more than may at first sight appear; for if the radical principle be denied, we shall

* See *e.g.* Thomasius' work on Origen. *Ein Beitrag fur Dogmen Geschichte des dritten Jahrhunderts.*

find ourselves, sooner or later, compelled to surrender, not only later definitions, but almost every belief which discriminates Christianity from the higher forms of natural religion. None who value any positive belief can afford to be mere spectators, still less aggressors in the fray. *Tua res agitur cum proximus ardet* was never more surely verified than here. It is Christianity itself that is at stake.

And now, as a principle is usually best understood by illustrations, I will proceed to exemplify in some crucial cases the gradual expression of doctrine in the Church.

(1.) Let us suppose a Christian of the first, or second, or third century to have been asked, "How many sacraments are there?" He certainly would not have understood the drift of the question. The word Sacrament was used by early writers, as the corresponding term *μυστήριον* is used in the New Testament, in a sense which includes indeed our conception of a sacrament, but which includes a great deal more besides. "This is a great mystery," or sacrament, says St. Paul, speaking of Christian marriage; but he also says, "Without doubt, great is the mystery of godliness," speaking of the Incarnation, and here again the Vulgate reads *sacramentum pietatis*. There is perhaps nothing to which the early Fathers, especially St. Augustine, so frequently apply the term *sacramentum* as the Incarnation. But, if our early Christian had been made with great difficulty to comprehend the question addressed to him, he could only have replied, "I don't know." The same sacraments were of course administered from the first, and all are referred to in Scripture. Then as now

Christians were baptized, confirmed, absolved, communicated; then as now, there was marriage, and ordination, and the last unction. But, just as for many ages doubtful or spurious Gospels and Epistles were handed down alongside of the genuine, and it was not till the end of the fourth century that the Canon of either Old or New Testament began to be fixed by dogmatic decree;* so for centuries other rites were spoken of under the common name of sacraments, some of which we should now call 'Sacramentals' while others, like the agape, or the washing of the feet, have almost or altogether passed away; and it was left for a later age to mark out seven, as alone possessing by divine institution an inherent sacramental grace. All were divinely ordained, and administered from the beginning in the Church; but it was only by degrees that the full conception of their precise nature and number grew upon her consciousness. To define two or seven is equally to develope; Peter Lombard was the first to specify an exact number. There were many differences on the subject among the earlier Reformers. It would not be difficult to trace out similarly the history of the doctrine of the Eucharist, but it would occupy more space than can be spared here.†

(2.) Let us turn to another illustration, afforded by the *cultus* of Saints and Angels. Of this no doubt abundant intimations—*φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσι*—may be found both in the Old

* St. Paul, St. James, and St. Jude, quote apocryphal books, some of which, as the *Revelation of Elias*, are now lost; some, as the *Book of Enoch*, still survive.

† The stages of the process are exhibited with clearness and candour in the late Archdeacon Wilberforce's book on the *Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*.

and New Testament, especially the latter, nor are there wanting clear testimonies in writers of the third and fourth centuries of honour paid to Saints, especially martyrs, and invocations addressed to them.* Still, and this is my point, it was only by degrees that their position was adequately recognized. In every one of the liturgies of which manuscripts remain to us, among the prayers for the departed in the Canon are found special petitions for the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. Controversialists have sometimes explained these as prayers for the increase of their 'accidental glory,' but the explanation is obviously an afterthought. The very term 'accidental glory,' and the idea it represents, came in centuries later with the scholastic theology. It is better to say at once—what is certainly the case—that the eye of the Christian worshipper was not yet adjusted to the right focus for appreciating clearly the position of the heavenly hierarchy in the economy of grace. The importance of the question, from its bearing on the central mystery of the Incarnation, was gradually brought out in subsequent controversies, especially in the Iconoclastic disputes of the eighth century.† It was not till the fourteenth century, that the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision by the Saints before the day of judgment was defined by authority.

(3.) This leads me naturally to notice a somewhat kindred development, and I do so the more readily because it has been

* Thomassin (*De Incarn.* xi. 6) thinks the early Church probably abstained from any *cultus* of Angels through an *οἰκονομία*, lest it should give occasion for idolatry in converts from heathenism. But this reasoning from the *disciplina arcani* must not be pushed too far.

† The first objectors to images were the Phantasiasts.

selected as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole theory—I mean the Immaculate Conception. The reasons for defining it at this particular time, and the nature of the defining authority, are separate questions, which lie beyond the limits of my present inquiry. But the doctrine itself is often objected to as neither primitive, nor scriptural, nor reasonable, nor devout; sometimes as ascribing to the Mother the inalienable prerogative of her Son.* Waiving the last point, which is founded on a misconception of what is meant, let us see how the case really stands.† The doctrine of original sin was first distinctly laid down by St. Augustine in controversy with the Pelagians in the fourth century, whence it is obvious that Mary's exemption from the general doom could not be taught earlier than that. But we may go further. St. Basil, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and Origen do not scruple to affirm that she sinned by want of faith at the Crucifixion; St. Chrysostom accuses her of ambition; Tertullian of unbelief. To our ears such language sounds shocking, and it would be shocking to use it now, but we must remember that it did not appear so at the time. On the other hand, St. Irenæus contrasts Mary's faith with Eve's incredulity, and St. Ambrose com-

* Even so calm and thoughtful a writer as the Bishop of London goes out of his way, in his Preface to a recent work on *The Final Court of Appeal*, to speak of 'the *idolatrous* doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.' Yet supposing (for argument's sake) that invocation of the Blessed Virgin is idolatrous, that practice is quite independent of the belief in her Immaculate Conception, and existed for centuries before any question on the latter subject was stirred in the Church. Neither does the belief necessarily imply the practice. Adam and Eve were certainly created 'immaculate,' yet we do not publicly invoke them.

† The patristic references in this and the following section are taken from Petavius *De Incarn.* and *De Trin.*

mends her courage at the Cross. Soon afterwards St. Augustine says that, out of reverence, he will make no mention of her when speaking of sin, but he is referring to actual, not original sin. Then came the Nestorian controversy, and the Council of Ephesus. And here it is worth while to remark, that much the same *kind* of arguments which are urged now against what its opponents are fond of stigmatising as the 'new dogma' were urged by Nestorians and their allies then against the new definition of θεοτοκὸς. It was novel, it did not occur in Scripture or the writings of the Fathers,* it savoured of Eutychian heresy, and had therefore been denounced from the pulpit of his metropolitan cathedral by the second Patriarch in Christendom. It was certainly needless, and it might be dangerous. Every one knew that Christ was God, and that Mary was His Mother; but the adoption of this new-fangled formula might be taken to imply that she was the mother of His Divinity, which was blasphemous, or that the two natures were fused into one, which was heretical. The term χριστοτοκὸς, which Nestorius was willing to accept, expressed all that was required, and was free from these grave objections. So men argued then; but experience has abundantly proved the necessity of the definition of Ephesus for guarding the honour of our Lord's Divinity. And so the later definition which our own days have witnessed is designed to exhibit on the one hand the reality of original sin, and on the other the spotless sanctity of that human flesh, hypostatically united to the Godhead, which He took from His Mother's

* This was urged, but was not strictly true.—See Petav. *De Inc.*, v. 15.

womb. Natural reason and natural reverence would combine to tell us that such a belief was most congruous to the dignity of the Incarnation; but it shows the caution with which the public ratification of developments is suffered to proceed, that so many centuries should have intervened between its first suggestion and its formal definition.* "The number of those (so-called) new doctrines will not oppress us, if it takes eight centuries to promulgate even one of them."† The disputes between Franciscans and Dominicans on the motive of the Incarnation had no doubt much to do with the ventilation of the question; for it is obvious how much more readily the Scotist theory adapts itself to the Immaculate Conception than the Thomist, though I am of course far from denying that the latter, which is still widely held in the Church, can be reconciled with it. St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, and St. Thomas, in questioning the new development, simply represented the conservative element which exists and always must exist in the Church. It is natural and right that every fresh phase of opinion, as it appears, should be challenged and put on the defensive. "*Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?*" is the inquiry it must expect to be greeted with. And it is bound to justify itself at the bar of ecclesiastical public opinion and theological science, before it can make any claim to direct

* It must be remembered that the belief in the Immaculate *Nativity* of the Blessed Virgin has prevailed universally for centuries, and was expressly acknowledged by St. Bonaventure, and St. Bernard, though spoken of doubtfully by St. Anselm. A similar belief obtains, though not of faith, as to St. John Baptist, and is indicated by the Feast of his Nativity being observed in the Church. Cf. Luke i. 15.

† Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, p. 395. Longman, 1864.

authoritative sanction. There is, perhaps, no subject on which the growth of doctrine has been so gradual as in all that concerns the dignity of the Blessed Virgin in the Gospel dispensation. And this accords with such passages of the Old Testament as are often considered to have a secondary reference to her. We read, on the one hand, "And so I was established in Sion, and in the holy city also I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And *I took root* in an honourable people, and my abiding place was in the fulness of the Saints." And again, on the other hand, "I was exalted as the cedar on Lebanon, and as the cypress tree on Mount Sion; I was exalted as a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho. . . . and I stretched forth my branches as the terebinth, and my branches are of honour and of grace." (Ecclus. xxiv. 15, 16, 17, 18, 22.) Yet it still remains true, that Gabriel's salutation is the measure and the record of her greatness. The importance of the question lies of course in its connection with the doctrine of the Incarnation. It has no proper bearing on particular views, moral or theological (such as some of St. Liguori's referred to by Dr. Newman in the *Apologia*), about her office or prerogatives in the Church. The glories of the Mother are a reflection from the divinity of her Son, and every crown that is wreathed for Mary's brow is laid at Jesus' feet.*

(4.) But we must not imagine, that the principle of development applies only to the less fundamental doctrines of Christianity. It is most conspicuously illustrated in the case of

* For some remarks on Mr. Bright's objections to the Immaculate Conception, see Note at the end of Introduction.

those two supreme verities on which all the rest depend—the Trinity and the Incarnation. We are reminded of this, as regards the former doctrine, by two of the greatest names respectively in Anglican and in Catholic theology—Petavius the Jesuit, and Bishop Bull. The *Defensio Fidei Nicænæ* has won for its author a deservedly high reputation, and is quoted respectfully by eminent Catholic divines. But in his controversy with Petavius, though he may have the better of the argument in some detailed instances, he has certainly failed to make out his case as a whole.* All impartial judges, on either side, are now agreed that Petavius is right as to the heterodox language, implying often heterodox notions about the Holy Trinity, which many ante-Nicene writers use. The fact that, in an elaborate treatise on the Holy Ghost, written expressly against heretics, St. Basil studiously refrains from giving Him the name of God (which was first done by the Council of Alexandria in 363) would alone indicate this. So again, Justin Martyr makes the Son inferior to the Father, in His divine nature. Athenagoras and Theophilus of Antioch use language about His Eternal Generation, which sounds thoroughly Sabellian. Origen, who first brings out the reality of our Lord's Human Soul, teaches also its preëxistence, and the final absorption of His human nature into the divine; Hilary and Epiphanius deny the union of His divine nature with His Body during the period between death and resurrection; St. Ambrose, relying on a mistaken reading of Col. ii. 15, also

* Cf. infr. Note I. to Chap. III.

denies its union with the Human Soul, though both are implied in the Apostles' Creed. Many Fathers, both Greek and Latin, in arguing with the Arians, treat the unity of Persons in the Holy Trinity as specific rather than numerical. It would be easy to multiply similar examples. The ὁμοούσιος of Nice was fully as much an epoch in the development of doctrine, as the subsequent addition of *Filioque* to the Nicene Creed. I need scarcely say, that early writers are equally vague, to use the mildest term, on many other subjects. Thus no Greek Father, before the Pelagian heresy, speaks of grace in language that would necessarily discriminate it from aids of the natural order; all before St. Augustine are silent or indistinct on the nature of original sin; St. Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* is the first systematic attempt to explain the doctrine of Atonement in its relation to the divine attributes.

And here it may be well to guard against a possible misconception. The growth, or even universal prevalence, of an opinion in the Church is no necessary evidence of its truth.* There are spurious as well as genuine developments. Opinions have flourished for centuries, though without receiving any authoritative sanction, and have passed away. Such, for in-

* Still less, of course, is the Church, as such, committed to the belief in any particular miracle or miracles, however widely spread, and however strong may be the evidence. It is worth while to remark this, when even so accomplished and candid a writer as the Dean of Westminster speaks of the 'assumption of a particular Church to direct the conscience of the world,' as standing or falling with the truth of the tradition about Loretto (Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 443); and Lord Macaulay could use 'a believer in the blood of St. Januarius,' as a synonyme for a Catholic. That miracles were to continue in the Church, and cannot therefore be *rejected wholesale* on *à priori* grounds, though no point of faith, is a direct inference from such passages of the New Testament, as Mark xvi. 17, 18, John xiv. 12, Acts ii. 17, *sqq.*, not to insist on Old Testament prophecies.

stance, was the once universal belief in a millennial reign of Christ on earth, founded on an expectation of His speedy return, which, for wise reasons doubtless, the Apostles were suffered to entertain. It was not till this belief died out, that room was left for the doctrine of Purgatory to occupy men's thoughts. St. Paul had spoken of the fire that should try every man's work, four centuries before the full significance of his words began to be apprehended. We have the first intimations of the doctrine, as now held, in St. Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, but stated only as a conjectural view. So, again, as regards the state of the lost, St. Augustine felt no scruple in consigning unchristened infants to endless torments. No theologian holds such an opinion now. In the fifteenth century the Council of Florence defined, that those who die in actual or only in original sin will be eternally, but *unequally*, punished. Later theology teaches, that the punishment of the latter consists solely in their not attaining to the Beatific Vision, for which they have no capabilities, and is consistent with the highest enjoyment of natural beatitude. Balmez applies the same principle to the case of adults, especially among heathen nations, who die with their moral and intellectual faculties feebly developed, and may be regarded as children in character and responsibility. The extreme predestinarian theory, into which St. Augustine was finally driven in his controversy with the Pelagians, but which he would probably have modified had he lived longer, remained for twelve centuries a floating opinion in the Church; it was not till it had been formulized into a system by Jansenius,

and had become the rallying cry of a powerful theological party, that it was authoritatively condemned.* Another opinion which has widely prevailed among Catholics, though borrowed originally from Protestants, but which is now known to be untenable, is a belief in the verbal inspiration of Scripture, first dogmatically laid down in the *Formula Consensus Helvetica* in 1675, but previously maintained by the great body of the Reformed. Biblical criticism is yet in its infancy, and discoveries like that of the *Codex Sinaiticus* (now established beyond dispute) may seriously affect it. Should the controversies of our own day ultimately lead to some definition on the meaning and limits of inspiration, or the nature of future retribution—subjects on which the Church has hitherto been silent—this in its turn would open out fresh sources of speculation in other directions. Thus, even a false or imperfect development may have a relative importance, and fulfil a providential office in the evolution of divine truth. There are opinions, again, which prevail, and have prevailed for centuries in the Church, but which have been expressly excluded from a place among articles of faith. Such is the very common belief in a material fire of Purgatory, which, though frequently ranked by Protestant controversialists among Catholic doctrines, was expressly declared, at the

* I am not, of course, forgetful of the controversy raised as to St. Augustine's real meaning; but there can be no doubt that the language of his *later* writings gave, to say the least, very plausible support to such views as those of Gotteschalk in the ninth century, and of the Jansenists afterwards. Sainte-Beuve, in his *History of Port Royal* (vol. ii. p. 129), quotes 'one of the most eloquent of the Catholic orators of our age,' as saying; "Il est vrai qu'il ne pouvait s' empêcher de croire que sur tout un ensemble de points le grand docteur, tout grand qu'il était, avait poussé à l'extréme et avait sans doute erré."

Council of Florence, to be matter of opinion only, and has never obtained in the East.

A further contrast must be drawn between development of doctrine and development of practice, though there is, of course, a close analogy between them. Here again my meaning will be best explained by illustration. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," is the statement of a principle of which the Franciscan or Cistercian Orders were a natural and legitimate expression; yet more than a thousand years intervened between the utterance of those words from the sun-crowned brow of Tabor and the time when Francis of Assisi drew up his rule of 'holy poverty,' or Bernard, in the flower and prime of youth, turned his back on all the endearments of a happy home to bury himself in the solitude of Citeaux. Or take the famous passage (Matt. xix. 12), which contains in germ the idea of celibacy as a Christian grace, and consider how gradual was its institution as a rule of life. At the close of the fourth century, Pope Siricius censured the marriage of the clergy in the Western Church; but though forbidden it was not made invalid till the time of Gregory VII., and in many parts of Europe, especially in England and Wales, it continued to be very common. So, again, sacramental absolution was ordained by our Lord for the remission of post-baptismal sin; but the rule of annual confession was first laid down by the Lateran Council in 1214, and accordingly from that time forth we find frequent mention of 'confessors' in royal or noble households, whereas before 'chaplains' only had been spoken of. Kneel-

ing at elevation in the Mass, and when the Blessed Sacrament is carried to the sick, was not ordered till the close of the thirteenth century, and the procession of Corpus Christi, first instituted by Urban IV. in 1264, only came into general use after the Council of Vienne in 1311, though the belief in the Real Presence had, of course, prevailed all along. In the early ages, again, it was customary for all the clergy to communicate at the bishop's mass; the practice of every priest saying his own mass afterwards became universal in the West, but the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice remains unchanged.* So far the analogy between doctrinal and practical developments seems complete; but there is an important distinction. A dogmatic development, once authoritatively sealed by the judgment of the Church, can never pass away, except as being merged in a higher and fuller realization of the same truth.† But practical developments are from their nature variable, though the principles they spring from are

* When daily celebration became general is a disputed point. The language of Acts ii. 46 seems to imply that it was the custom of the Apostolic Church, but Dr. Döllinger understands the passage differently *(Christenthum*, p. 351*)*, from there being no later evidence of such a rule for some centuries. Wilberforce *(Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist)* argues the other way. Attendance at the Holy Sacrifice on Sundays and festivals was undoubtedly of universal obligation from the first.

† It is quite possible, of course, for the same theological *language* to be at one time accepted, and at another rejected by the Church, according to the sense in which it is understood, as happened with the term ὁμοούσιος. Thus again, St. Cyril's famous dictum, μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη, was received by the fifth General Council, and is explained and defended at length by Petavius in its orthodox acceptation, as used by the writer against Nestorius; but it was abused by the Eutychians in the service of their opposite heresy, and could not safely be adopted in public teaching now. So the formula, 'One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh,' was condemned by Pope Hormisdas, and accepted by his successors, but in different senses.—See Petav. *De Incarn.* v. 2, 3.

not. The religious consecration of virginity, as a state of life, is a principle implied in the words of our Lord and His inspired Apostle, but particular rules about vows of celibacy may vary with variations of time and circumstance. The adoration of Christ in the Eucharist follows immediately from the belief in His Presence, but the methods of external worship need not always be the same. Absolution and communion are divine ordinances, but special rules about the manner and frequency of their ministration are left to the discretion of the Church. The same practices may not be equally adapted to every age and condition of society; and what the Church has solemnly sanctioned at one time, she may, with equal wisdom, alter or abrogate at another. Thus, rules about fasting have varied according to time, climate, or other circumstances. Communion in both kinds was expressly enjoined by Pope Gelasius in the fifth century, in opposition to a current heresy; it began to be discontinued in the West in the thirteenth, and the later practice has lasted on, with certain exceptions, to our own day.* Daily Communion was the ordinary practice of the Early Church, but by 1215 the love of Christians had waxed so cold, that it was found necessary to enjoin at least an annual reception under pain of sin. I need scarcely say, that in our own day it would be thought little short of scandalous for any one professing to lead a

* In the early ages, those who communicated *at home*, as was then very common, received under the form of Bread only; infants were communicated immediately after baptism with the chalice, as is still the custom of the Greek Church, where also the *viaticum* is given to the dying under the form of Bread, dipped in unconsecrated wine.

religious life to communicate so seldom. To take a different case; the whole legislation of the Church, as regards the intercourse of Catholics with those without, was pretty well revolutionized by the Council of Constance, acting under a just appreciation of the altered conditions of European society. These are but a few instances, selected almost at random, of the various or seemingly contrary applications of a common principle, according to the exigences of time and place, of which Church history is full. The mystical Bride was not only to be all 'glorious from within,' but also 'clothed in raiment of many colours,' and it is no paradox to say that she is ever changing while still the same. To her we may apply the poet's words—

> "Mother of form and fear,
> Dread arbitress of *mutable* respect."

A still closer analogy, in some respects, may be traced between the development of doctrine and the growth of what are called 'special devotions' in the Church, which are themselves the corollaries of doctrine.*

To revert to doctrinal developments; this may seem the place for saying something of the antecedent tests by which their value is ascertained, but the subject is too wide to be more than glanced at here. It is obvious, at first blush, that every true development must be in harmony with the original revelation, and the mind of God; and thus any theory, for

† This has been done in the case of one such devotion in Dalgairns' book on the *Heart of Jesus*. Richardson, 1854.

instance, which should trench on the Incarnation, or Divinity, or mediatorial office of the Eternal Son, or, again, on the moral principles of Christianity, would be at once self-condemned. It is clear, on the other hand, that no development could be admitted, which should conflict with truths already known from other sources, as from natural reason, science, or history. God cannot contradict Himself. His word in revelation must be in perfect accord with His word written in the heart of man, or on the crust of the earth, or on the firmament of heaven. Hence no development which should exalt what are usually called the 'Evangelical virtues'—those first introduced by Christianity—to the exclusion or disparagement of the so-called natural virtues—those which Christianity did not introduce, but most certainly adopted and sanctioned—could be a true one. There may have been periods in the history of the Church when purity, humility, and other virtues of the Gospel had almost come to be regarded, in some quarters, as a substitute for truth, virtue, manliness, and other virtues of the natural order; or, again, when Manichean notions as to the impurity of matter were implicitly, though not consciously, entertained. But these could be no more than passing phases of opinion, and have never been absorbed into the texture of her inner life. Hence again, as we observed just now, the theory of literal inspiration, so dear to one large school of Protestants, is untenable, being disproved by facts. I will mention but one other test, which is implied in the very term development, and is expressly noticed by St. Vincent of Lerins, in the passage quoted

above, viz., that it means progress from less to more; it must be an accession to our knowledge, and must enlarge, not narrow, the boundaries of religious thought. The collective mind of the Church, gazing from age to age at the orb of divine truth, using all available appliances from without, and enlightened by the Spirit from within, grows continually in wisdom as in strength, and her path is as the shining light which increaseth continually unto perfect day.

This part of the subject may be fitly closed with the account of the limits, within which the developing authority of the Church is exercised, given by one eminently qualified to speak on the subject; "The great truths of the moral law, of natural religion, and of Apostolical faith, are both its boundary and its foundation. It must not go beyond them, and it must ever appeal to them. Both its subject-matter, and its articles in that subject-matter, are fixed. . . . . It must ever profess to be guided by Scripture and by tradition. It must refer to the particular Apostolic truth which it is enforcing, or (what is called) defining. . . . . The new truth which is promulgated, if it is to be called new, must be at least homogeneous, cognate, implicit, viewed relatively to the old truth. It must be what I may even have guessed, or wished, to be included in the Apostolic revelation; and at least it will be of such a character that my thoughts readily concur in it, or coalesce with it, as soon as I hear it."* It is of course implied here, as the author expressly states elsewhere in reference to the Immaculate Conception, that a 'new truth' may not always be recognized

* Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, pp. 392, 393.

till after ages of controversy, and may even for a time be strenuously opposed. The divine illumination vouchsafed to the Church does not supersede or anticipate the historical development of her thought.

And now, before proceeding to consider objections, let me notice, in passing, one or two practical corollaries which follow from what has been said. First, it is clear that we have no right to be hasty in rejecting new developments in theology simply because they are new. Very often, indeed, the novelty is of appearance only, and we are but welcoming 'old friends with new faces.' But, if not, let us remember that every fresh definition, from the ὁμοούσιος of Nicæa downwards, has been branded in turn with the charge of novelty. It was superfluous because it contained nothing new, or it was dangerous because it did. But wisdom is justified of all her children. If we choose to be startled or scandalized at what we do not immediately comprehend, the course of theological science will not therefore stand still for us, like the sun and moon in the valley of Ajalon.

Neither, on the other hand, must we carp at scientific discoveries, which seem to trench on received opinions. In such cases it has been very common, first to say that the new theory is untrue; and then that it is dangerous to religion; and when at last it is proved to be both true and innocuous, that it is unimportant, for every one knew it before. But this is neither wise nor altogether honest. If there is a danger in offending the prejudices of the ignorant, there is also a danger of shaking the faith of the learned, when we insist on de-

nouncing as irreligious what they perhaps know to be a demonstrated fact. *Noli æmulari.* Either our opinion was merely an opinion, and no part of revealed dogma at all, or the alleged discovery will turn out to be only a conjectural hypothesis, serviceable for the moment but destined to pass away, or the two do not really clash. In any case, the cause of truth is safe. A Catholic, firm in his belief, will have as little desire to check the free course of science, as doubt that its results will ultimately tend to the confirmation of faith. He may indeed complain of random assertions, hasty generalizations, of treating hypotheses as conclusions, and identifying difficulties with disproof; and no honest student of science will quarrel with him for doing so.* When we remember how it was once imagined, by friend and foe alike, that revelation itself was at stake in the discussion of the solar system, we can afford to smile at the ignorance, or the impatience, or the unbelief, which welcomes or dreads, as the case may be, in the results of geology or physiology, a probable death-blow to our Christian faith.†

But I must hasten on to notice, in conclusion, two leading

* The office of the apologist is to trace from time to time the "*Connection* of Science and Revealed Religion," as Cardinal Wiseman has so ably done, not to contrast them as antagonistic systems.

† Supposing, for instance, the Darwinian theory of the 'origin of species,' were ever to be recognized as a scientific truth (which I am very far from saying that it will be), the Catholic doctrine of the Fall would remain untouched. For after all we must draw the line somewhere; there must be a point in the series of animal developments, where man, in the language of Scripture, 'became a living *soul*,' unless the existence of the soul be denied altogether, and then would begin those relations of the human soul with God comprehended under the terms 'original justice,' and 'original sin.'

objections, one of a theoretical, the other of a practical kind, which are frequently urged against the principle of development, though, in fact, they only require to be thoroughly sifted to be conclusively disproved.

It is objected, then, often not without contemptuous acrimony, that to maintain a development of doctrine is a dishonour to revelation, and an implicit denial of the faith once delivered to the Saints; that Scripture can have no place in a religion which is one thing yesterday, another to-day, and may be a third quite different to-morrow; and that it is an accident, whether the journey lands us in the blasphemies of Strauss, or the decrees of Trent. Now, if this is anything more than a simple misconception of the whole question, sufficiently met by the last quotation from Dr. Newman, it is not only untrue, but the precise reverse of the truth. Instead of development being a dishonour to revelation, so far as we are capable of forming any *à priori* judgments on the subject, it would be a great dishonour to revelation to deny it. If it is certainly a law of the human mind in relation to every other kind of truth, philosophical, moral, or scientific, that our mental no less than our bodily muscles are developed by use, it would be a *primâ facie* objection to any professed system of revealed truth, that it did not repay by a fresh accession of knowledge the labour and attention bestowed upon it. Or shall we say, that in the highest subject-matter of all the mind is forbidden to energize, or must energize with no results? While development is the law of all God's natural dispensations, are we to predicate an exceptional stagnation

of the kingdom of grace? To imagine that theology, as we now possess it, sprang full-grown from the mind of the first century, like Pallas from the head of Zeus, is but to transfer to the moral what we have learnt to discard from our conceptions of the material world, a succession of miraculous cataclysms with another succession of supplementary miracles to obliterate all traces of them.

But, perhaps, our opponents will join issue on the fact. Let us therefore appeal to facts. And here I will not refer to the obviously gradual education of the Gentile world, in God's Providence, till the 'fulness of time' for the Incarnation had arrived. I will appeal to the more decisive analogy of the Old Testament dispensation. There, if anywhere, we might expect the law of development to be suspended, for the commandment, written on tables of stone, was a letter rather than a spirit, and the Jewish Church, while possessing a divine revelation, had no infallible authority. But was it so? Most surely not. Nowhere is the 'increasing purpose' of revelation more conspicuous than throughout the Old Testament dispensation, from Patriarchs to Prophets, from Prophets to writers later still. Not to insist here on the growing tone of higher spirituality as we advance from the earlier to the later books, as is seen in the marked change from the ritualism of the Pentateuch to the more spiritual tone of the Canticles or Isaiah, I will confine myself to what is strictly doctrinal. We are all familiar with the argument of Warburton's famous work on the *Divine Legation of Moses*, where he undertakes to prove the inspiration of the Pentateuch from the absence of

any direct teaching contained in it of a future life. No impostor, he urges, would have neglected so powerful an engine of influence as that belief supplies; certainly all, with whose history we are acquainted, have availed themselves of it. Whatever becomes of his argument, the fact is beyond dispute. But now turn from the Mosaic record to the Prophets, or the Deutero-canonical books. Instead of the curse of sterility and blessing of longevity, we read the praise of virginity, and the happy lot of the man who 'being perfected in a short time hath fulfilled many times,' and is 'taken from the midst of iniquities, lest malice should change his understanding, or guile deceive his soul.' Instead of old age being 'a crown of glory,' we read, that 'venerable old age standeth not in length of time, nor is computed by number of years, but wisdom is the grey hair of man, and an unspotted life is old age'—(Wisd. iv. 8, 9)—and again, "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction, but they are in peace. . . . . We fools accounted their life to be madness, and their end without honour. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is with the Saints." Wisd. iii. 1, 2, 3, v. 4, 5. And so completely had this doctrine of a future life become part of the national creed, that the Sadducees, who denied it, and on that account rejected all the later books of the Old Testament, were regarded, in the time of our Lord, as little better than a sect of heretics. Nor let it be replied that,

under the Old Law, the fount of inspiration never ran dry, but was sealed up in the first century of our era. For, not to dwell here on the partial inspiration which many have ascribed to such men as St. Bernard, or Savonarola, or Thomas à Kempis, we possess in the divine illumination of the Church of all ages—ἡ ἀεὶ ἐκκλησία—a surer guarantee against error than could be found in the intermittent utterances of holy men of old.* The same Spirit, who once 'spoke by the Prophets,' abides for ever in the mystical Body of Christ. Now indeed, as then, whenever some special crisis occurs, we need not doubt that a special prophet or preacher of righteousness will be raised up to meet it, from whose lips a fresh energy may be caught for the enlightenment or regeneration of them that come after. Thus, amid the collapse of ancient philosophies, and fabrics of political greatness tottering to their fall, the form of Socrates is revealed against the dark background of heathen antiquity clothed in the radiance of an ideal purity, and, as he conquers by the sacrifice of his life the right to teach a higher wisdom than as yet men cared to listen to, giving dim surmise of a Higher Presence yet to come. Thus, in the deep decline of the fifteenth century, with its hideous moral depravities, and terrible burden of secret unbelief, the white-robed monk of Florence stands forth, annealed in martyr-flames, to bear witness to an outraged holiness, and

* The Hebrew Prophets discharged an office somewhat analogous to that of the *sensus fidelium* or public opinion of the Church among ourselves, standing to the Levitical priesthood in the relation of the earnest and intelligent laity to the clergy. This analogy, however, must not be pressed too far, as the ritual and prophetic offices, separated under Judaism, are united in the Christian priesthood.

give warnings, little heeded, of the judgments that were coming upon the earth.* But it is our privilege, as contrasted with our Heathen or Israelite forefathers, that we are not mainly dependent on such exceptional interpositions raised up for an emergency, but can assimilate the intellectual acquisitions of every age as it passes, knowing how to separate the dross from the genuine ore, to refuse the evil and choose the good. If, then, all systems of ancient philosophy, so far as they had any truth in them, contained not mere arbitrary axioms, but germs to be developed in the thinking mind; if the light of divine inspiration, handed down through a long line of Patriarchs and Prophets, like the fire of a Greek torch race, kindled more and more continually towards brighter day —there were little reason and less reverence in denying, that the words of Christ and His apostles are instinct with a fulness of divine life, with capabilities of infinite expansion, of which our creeds and theologies are a true but inadequate expression, which the science of eighteen centuries has fed upon but has not exhausted. Who does not recognize the manifold teaching of the Psalter, as its thunderous echoes roll from age to age along the aisles of our stately Cathedrals, and its whispered music cheers the lonely deathbed, and its tones of awful supplication call 'out of the depths' of human misery on that divine compassion which watches over the Christian dead? The very form of the New Testament, which contains not

* Savonarola has often been claimed as a forerunner of Luther. It may be worth while, therefore, to observe, that his writings, after a rigorous scrutiny at Rome, were pronounced entirely free from doctrinal error. St. Philip Neri had a special reverence for him.

dogmas but principles, narratives and letters instead of creeds, is a stronger confirmation of our view. Its very 'half sentences, its overflowings of language, admit of development; they have a life in them which shows itself in progress.'* What more unlike in form than De Lugo's *De Incarnatione*, and the Gospel of St. John? Yet the great Jesuit does but formulize the apostle's belief. It took centuries to draw out the full significance of those few verses that are read in the Gospel at the end of the Mass, as it took centuries to exhibit all that was contained in the commission addressed to Peter, on the shore of Gennesaret, "Feed My sheep." Consider, again, all that is involved in the idea of *personality*, which, though not new in itself, must have come almost like a new revelation on St. Paul's Greek and Roman converts. The heavenly message is addressed to the Church, like the words of Christ to His blessed Mother in the temple of Jerusalem, not merely to be received with devout acquiescence, but to be laid up and pondered in the heart, to become the source of growing knowledge, a seed springing up continually into higher forms of life.

The second and last objection which I shall notice here proceeds from a class of thinkers deserving of deep sympathy and respect. They would say in effect that this theory, however plausible it may look on paper, is, after all, nothing but a theory; that, whatever intellectual difficulties may be started, their own system holds water practically; that the three creeds, and the great verities of Christianity, have been accepted by thousands who indignantly rejected all later 'additions;'

* Newman's *University Sermons*, pp. 317, 318; see also pp. 337, 338.

that the Bible, whatever criticism may object to its authenticity or inspiration, has, in fact, been to thousands a rule of conduct, a guide in perplexity, an unfailing source of strength in life and solace on the bed of death. The Greek Church, it will perhaps be added, has never admitted the principle of development, but has none the less maintained intact its inheritance of orthodox belief. I have no wish to dispute the facts, but they are no real objection to my argument. The Eastern Church presents certainly the nearest existing approach to a crystallized, or undeveloped form of Christianity; and the explanation is not far to seek. Having adopted the developments of the first eight centuries, and kept clear of all later Western definitions, she has been able thenceforward to maintain her *status quo* almost unchanged; but only because for the last thousand years, owing to circumstances it would take too long to specify here, she has stood aloof from the whole course of European thought, and has advanced neither in dogmatic nor moral theology, in Biblical criticism, or historical research. Once bring her into contact with the criticism, the questionings, the doubts of the day, and she will be compelled either to advance or to recede, either to sacrifice what she jealously retains, or to recognize new applications of her ancient faith. There has been too little temptation to fall into error, to suggest the necessity for harmonizing truth.* In England there has of course been

* The Greeks, however, did put forth a confession of faith in 1643, in consequence of the Calvinistic tendencies of Cyril Lucar, under the title of "Orthodox Confession of Faith of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church," which was confirmed by the Synod of Bethlehem in 1672. With this may be compared the English articles and formularies. The term transubstantiation (μετουσίωσις) was adopted by the Synod of Bethlehem.

more freedom of thought, but the strong conservative elements of the national character have combined with the Catholic elements of written or verbal tradition retained in the national Church, and which discriminate her broadly from continental Protestantism, to sustain in the hearts of the people a large inheritance of orthodox feeling and belief. They have accepted the Bible, and have (often unconsciously) accepted with it a traditional interpretation of its meaning on many points, partly because it has never occurred to them to question the one or the other. And we may rejoice that it has been so. But this period of unthinking acquiescence is rapidly passing away. A School, long powerful in Germany, has, of late years, made its way into England, which, from the far wider interest felt in religious questions in this country, may be expected to exercise a tenfold greater influence here over popular Christianity. Of its more prominent members all would wish to speak with that respect which their character, their learning, and their abilities deserve; in their generosity of tone, and in some of their detailed opinions, they excel many who profess a more orthodox belief. But there can be no doubt that their teaching, logically carried out, would disintegrate the whole received system of Christianity, however little they may contemplate such a result, or be prepared to face it. And their line of argument can be met successfully only by a bold and ungrudging assertion of the Catholic as opposed to the rationalistic principle of development. For the champions of dogmatic Christianity to ignore it, is as though an astronomer should ignore the laws of motion, or a physiologist the circulation of the blood. The Christ of the

Gospels, they would tell us, was gradually formulized, through the action of ecclesiastical dogmatism, into the Christ of later theology, till we pass from the simplicity of the evangelical narratives to the technical subtilties of the creeds.* "To attribute," says the greatest writer in the well-known volume of *Essays and Reviews*, "to St. Paul or the Twelve the abstract notion of Christian truth which afterwards sprang up in the Church, is the same sort of anachronism as to attribute to them a system of philosophy." This may be true, but when the same writer goes on to suggest that the ὁμοούσιος of Nice was only a less misfortune to the Church than would have been caused by an opposite decision, and we are justly bidden to observe that the traditions of the first century, without any notion of development, are an insufficient basis for the theology of the nineteenth, we are practically reminded that the same scythe which lops off the doctrinal 'innovations' of Trent is ready to include in its ruthless sweep the definitions of Nicæa, and the Athanasian Creed. Nor let the mere Protestant, who cares nothing for creeds and controversies, console himself with the fond belief that, at any rate, the cause of 'Bible Christianity' is safe.† One of the most brilliant, if not the most profound, of living French writers, himself once

* An able sketch of the leading characteristics of the Tübingen School (suggested by the Colenso controversy) will be found in an article by M. Edmond Schœrer, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, for March, 1863. 'Confessions d'un Missionaire.'

† To quote M. Guizot's words, in his recently published *Meditations on the Christian Religion*, "It is in fact the whole Christian Church, and not this or that Christian Church in particular, which is at the present day the object of attack in its fundamental principles. When the supernatural, the inspiration of the Sacred Books, and the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ are denied, the blow falls upon all Christians, whether Catholics, Protestants, or Greeks."

a Catholic believer, has lately taught us how possible it is to accept nearly the whole framework of the Gospel narrative, while rejecting, without even the poor compliment of refutation, the Divinity of Him of whom the Gospel speaks, written though we had deemed it as with a sunbeam on every page. Another writer of the same nation, the greatest of living novelists, when describing his ideal of a Christian death-bed, makes his hero expire, gazing indeed on the crucifix, to remind him of the 'example of the Great Martyr,' but neglecting the sacraments, as neither appreciating the reality of guilt nor the need of atonement. A third has aspired to found not only a philosophy, but a religion and a Church, based on a negation of theism, and of the future life. Views similar in tendency, though differing considerably in detail from each other, have been advocated by such writers as Gregg and F. Newman among ourselves, Emerson and Theodore Parker in America.

Let it be well remembered that opinions of this kind, and I have but cursorily noted their bearing here, are steadily on the increase, that they have already gained the public ear, and meet with something more than acquiescence from the rising intellect of the day. What future may be in store for the Church, or for the world, I know not, nor do I presume to meddle with vexed interpretations of prophetic lore. There are those who deem the reign of Antichrist is at hand. Be this as it may, in one sense he is always near, and it needs no prophet's eye to discern to-day on the spiritual horizon many of the predicted signs of his coming, written so that he

who runs may read. If, indeed, the rival hosts are marshalling now for the last great conflict, it gives to the controversies of the present a deeper and more solemn significance. I am far, of course, from forgetting how much there is in the religious temper of the day to encourage as well as to alarm us, distinguishing it most honourably from many former periods of Christian history. Our very scepticism is other than it was. We have little now of the coarse exultant blasphemy of Tom Paine and Voltaire; there is a tone of diffidence, almost of sadness, in avowedly infidel literature, and those who doubt seem loath, not eager, to disbelieve. They share the feeling expressed by our representative poet, of 'an infant crying for the light.' On the other hand, a conscious or unconscious yearning for unity is gaining ground among those estranged by centuries of strife, and there is a growing conviction that the unprofitable bitterness of mere negative controversy is treason against the majesty of truth.* Ours is an age of uncertain and conflicting tendencies, powerful alike for good or for evil, suggesting the gravest anxieties, yet brightened with the dawning promise of a second spring. One thing, at any rate, is clear enough—that we are on the eve of a crisis, such as for the last three centuries the Church has not witnessed. The Reformation was but the first act of a drama which has yet to be played out; and it may be expected that our own age will see questions stirred more searching even than any

* The existence of a 'deep and all-possessing desire for unity' is insisted on with startling emphasis in Mr. Maurice's 'Few Words on the Pope's Encyclical' in *Macmillan's Magazine* for Feb. 1865. His testimony is not the less significant, because it is not easy to grasp his idea of the right use to be made of it.

that were mooted then. *Nullum tempus occurrit Ecclesiæ.* But it is of the last importance that, at this supreme crisis of her history, her children should be closely united, and well equipped to meet the coming foe, not with the blunted or misshapen implements of a ruder warfare and a coarser age, but with weapons forged and polished fresh in the armoury of wisdom, of justice, and of truth. Once, in the iconoclastic controversy, Christian art and civilization sued for admission before the portals of the Eastern Church, and were rejected; and she sank for awhile into a sterile petrifaction of her former self. John of Damascus, in the eighth century, was her last theologian. The Renaissance stood before the gates of Rome, and was admitted. The Reformation rent half Europe from her obedience, and resulted in the decrees of Trent. Science, philosophy, and criticism are knocking at our doors to-day. We must accept or reject them, and to reject their aid is to hand them over to the service of error. Now, as ever, the Church must go forth to conquer in the might of that Gospel which she, and she alone, is divinely commissioned to proclaim; but now too, as ever, like a good householder, she must bring forth from her treasures things old *and new.*

Truth, indeed, like Him whose voice she is, is one and indivisible, and knows, 'in her deep self,' nothing 'of transient form.' Yet the shadow varies, though the substance cannot change; the earthly reflection grows from age to age, but the Word of the Lord 'endureth for ever in heaven.' The whole revelation of God, all spiritual truth that has been or shall be known on earth from the beginning to the day of doom, was latent from the first in the Church's spiritual consciousness,

but it existed there as the universe, visible or invisible, existed before creation—an unbreathed music, an unspoken poetry, deep within the Heart of God. One by one, in their fulness and their detail, its manifold glories were to dawn on her inner apprehension, and become part of her organic life, as the stars are painted one by one on the darkening azure of the sunset sky. There can be no stint to her growing knowledge, no stay in the kindling path of her divine illumination, till the fires of Pentecost are quenched in the brightness of the everlasting sunshine. It may be said that all the articles of the creed are summed up in its opening clause, *Credo in unum Deum*, as all musical tones are summed up in the seven notes of the scale. His omnipotence is the origin of creation; the Incarnation and the Passion are the expression of His boundless love; justification is the work of His wisdom; His mercy is the measure of our endless beatitude; His justice is revealed in the fiery chastisement of sin. And so it would scarcely be too much to say, that the whole circle of revealed truths is wrapped up in the very letter of the Scriptural record, but then that record (if I may be pardoned a homely simile) is like the handkerchief written over with sympathetic ink, which must be held to the fire for the characters to come out to view; or as the faculties nascent in the human mind, which require to be elicited by influence from without, and fixed by mental analysis; or rather, let me say, it is like the dry bones in the valley of the Prophet's vision, which await the breath of that Spirit who inhabits and illuminates the Church, to quicken the dull clay with power from on high, and make it a living soul.

NOTE TO INTRODUCTION.

THE ATONEMENT AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

It is a very common, but very ignorant, objection to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, that it places the Blessed Virgin beyond the need of redemption; and I have even known of sermons being preached against it on the text, 'My spirit hath rejoiced in God my *Saviour*.' Those who so argue can never have read the decree of Dec. 8, 1854, which expressly affirms, "that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of God, *in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the human race*, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin."* Nor is it more to the purpose to object, as is also frequently done, that her conception was not, like that of our Divine Lord, *miraculous*. An Oxford writer, of deserved theological reputation, seems almost to think it a sufficient disproof of the doctrine to quote some words from a sermon of St. Leo's, to the effect that Christ alone was born innocent, because His birth alone was not through the ordinary laws of generation.† But that is not the point. Without entering here on the vexed question of the manner of its transmission, it is obvious that original sin affects directly the soul, not the body. And the soul is created immediately by God, though its creation is dependent on certain physical antecedents. The body of the Blessed Virgin (as in all probability our Lord's also) was subject to the conditions of infirmity introduced by the Fall.‡ But we hold that her soul was, by a special grace

* Bishop Ullathorne's *Immaculate Conception*, p. 198. Richardson 1855.

† Bright's *Sermons of St. Leo with Notes*. Note 1. Masters.

‡ Her death therefore is no argument against her sinlessness, as is urged by the clever but very one-sided author of *Quelques Mots sur les Communions Occidentales*, p. 84. Leipzig, 1855. Cf. *Encore Quelques Mots*, p. 29. Leipzig, 1858.

and for the merits of her Son, perfectly sanctified at the moment of its creation, as ours are in the sacrament of baptism. It is, further, a pious and universal belief (though not matter of faith) dating at latest from the time of St. Augustine, that she was preserved through life by a special grace from all defilement of actual sin. To call such a belief derogatory to the grace of God, or the merits of our Redeemer, is unmeaning. Rather it commends itself to the instinctive feelings of a religious mind. And accordingly we find the great English poet of the last generation exclaiming:—

> "Mother, whose virgin bosom was uncrost
> By slightest shade of thought to sin allied,
> Woman above all women glorified,
> *Our tainted nature's solitary boast.*"*

It is of course true, as Mr. Bright observes, that St. Leo 'knew nothing of the Immaculate Conception,' as it is true, in the same sense, that a host of early Greek fathers 'knew nothing' of the doctrine of original sin. But it is a confusion of thought to suppose that he intended to *contradict* an opinion not brought into debate in his day. There were later writers, as St. Bernard, who did oppose it, partly from misapprehension of its precise meaning, partly on grounds proved, after being sifted through some eight centuries, to be inadequate. Arguments of this kind are two-edged swords. Those at least who defend the present form of the Nicene Creed (and I know of but one Anglican divine who declines to do so) may be expected to remember for how many centuries the definition *Filioque* was unknown, and what high authorities have rejected it.

I have had occasion more than once in the course of this volume to point out, that the Scotist view of the Incarnation, which naturally allies itself with the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, is most accordant with the general *spirit* of patristic teaching, though not expressly maintained by any early writer. The whole doctrinal question is elaborately discussed in Passaglia's *De Immaculato Deiparæ semper Virginis Conceptu Commentarius*, 3 vols. folio; and is exhibited in a more concise and popular form, but with great lucidity of statement, in the Bishop of Birmingham's book already referred to.

* Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*.

THE ATONEMENT.

THE ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS ON THE SUBJECT, AND THE METHOD OF TREATING IT.

That Jesus died, the Just for the unjust, to redeem mankind from the bondage of corruption, and restore the broken communion between earth and heaven, is, and ever has been, a fundamental verity of the Christian faith. From that uplifted cross, for eighteen centuries, He has been drawing all men by the 'cords of Adam' to Himself. Round the altars where that one true Sacrifice, offered once in blood on Calvary, is presented perpetually in a bloodless mystery, from the rising to the setting of the sun, has been gathered through those eighteen centuries of her chequered history the faith, the penitence, the devotion of the Church He purchased by that greatest pledge of love. Yet, even as then among the spectators of the crucifixion there were some who worshipped and some who doubted, and its stillness was broken by the questionings, or the jests, or the mockeries of those for whose

sake it was endured, so it has been till now. And especially has this been the case since the fierce controversies of the Reformation period involved the whole subject in the confusions of a theological warfare, where men darken counsel with many words, and strive rather for a party triumph than for simple truth. Forgetting or greatly underrating, for the most part, the significance of the Incarnation as the centre-point of all Christian belief, the first leaders of the movement in the sixteenth century dragged forward into disproportionate prominence, and often in connection with an erroneous theory of 'imputation,' one side and one only of that divine mystery, namely, the doctrine of the Atonement. And hence there has grown up in many quarters a way of looking at that doctrine, and speaking of it, full of difficulties to the devout believer, and offering abundant opportunities for the cavils of the sceptic. It has been so stated as to cloud our most primary conceptions of the attributes of God; and to imply, or seem to imply, a division of will between the Persons of the undivided Trinity, in whom being and will are one. And so men have come to complain that they cannot believe in a justice which strikes the innocent, while it spares the criminal; that they cannot understand a love which waits to forgive till it has exacted rigorous compensation; or recognize the holiness of that displeasure against sin which is content to exhale in displeasure against the Sinless One. Such objections may often be urged in a tone of mockery, or disbelief; but it is not always so. It will not then, I trust, be an unprofitable task to show that the doctrine of atonement held and taught from the beginning in the Catholic

Church is open to no such criticism. An investigation of her teaching, as laid down by the Fathers and later theologians who are the accredited interpreters of her mind, will show that the opinions fairly open to objection are no part of it, but are either those of particular writers or schools only; or such as have prevailed for a season and then passed away, like the notion of a ransom paid to the evil one; or were put forward from the first with an heretical animus, and have never found a home within her pale; or are the doctrines of those who have formally renounced her creed. Meanwhile a few words may be said here, by way of preface, in reference to some common misapprehensions on the subject.

First, then, it must be always borne in mind that in speaking of the avenging justice, or the wrath of God, we mean by such language, which is necessarily more or less metaphorical, simply to express His holiness, in relation to fallen man. Righteousness is the best equivalent in our language for the theological term *justitia*, which has a far wider scope than is ascribed in ordinary usage to the English word justice, or giving everyone his due, though it of course includes it.* It is not that we have done an injury to God for which He requires a *quid pro quo*, as in a case of injustice between man and man, or that He is angry as though we had defrauded Him, as when Christ is said, in a hymn of Dr. Watts's, to have 'smoothed the

* 'Justice,' in its narrower sense, as applied to the Incarnation, is generally used by the Fathers in reference to Satan. Thus *e. g.* St. Augustine says, "Non autem diabolus potentia Dei, sed *justitia* superandus fuit." (*De Trin.* xiii. 13.) On the other hand he says, soon afterwards, "Quid enim *justius* quam usque ad mortem Crucis pro justitia perseverare?" (*ib.* c. 14.) where obviously 'what greater evidence of righteousness or holiness?' is meant.

angry Father's face;' it is no such unworthy and anthropomorphic conception as this that we mean, when we speak of a satisfaction to His justice, or a sacrifice to appease His wrath. It is the perfect holiness of God, which is one with Himself, that is outraged by sin, and then becomes what is frequently called in Scripture His indignation or anger, and expresses itself in the chastisement of the sinner. It is that holiness which is satisfied by the spotless sacrifice of His Son; 'not,' as St. Bernard says, 'His death, but His will in voluntarily dying.' We need not doubt that He might, had He so willed, have pardoned us on our repentance, without any sacrifice at all; but He preferred a method of reconciliation which established alike His holiness and His love. We had fallen away, not by any arbitrary external accident, but by a moral perversion of our will; and He therefore chose to redeem us through a moral act, through the perfect oblation of a will obedient to His own. It was a consequence of the Fall, and it is so still, that obedience could only be exercised through suffering; that the right to benefit mankind could only be purchased through enduring their persecution *: and Jesus submitted for our sakes to that law which was the fruit of our sin, and which, while He has not repealed it, for all who love Him He has turned from a curse into a blessing. As others suffer for our sins, so also do they benefit by our suffering for righteousness' sake. It would be superfluous to illustrate this in detail from the familiar history of the Jewish, or the Christian Church. We know full well how the shadow of His cross

* 1 Tim. iii. 12.

has more or less deeply fallen on all who prefigured Him under the Old Law, on all who have been preëminent as His followers under the New; making them, after their measure and degree, partakers of His sufferings. That was no unmeaning record inscribed on the luminous cross which converted the first Christian emperor to the obedience of faith: *In hoc signo vinces.* It sums up in four short words the work of the Redeemer, and the mission of His earthly Church. On that I need not dwell.

It is more to the purpose to observe, that, even without the limits of His visible kingdom, the same principle had been perceived and exemplified. The well-known passage in Plato's *Republic*,* which sounds almost like an echo of inspired prophecy in its thrilling description of the perfectly righteous man, whom, because of his righteousness, his fellows will scourge and crucify, is in fact but a summary of the whole experience of mankind. Of the two most religious heathen of whom history tells us, it is remarkable that one was a persecutor and the other a martyr. Socrates died, because he would not purchase safety at the price of his convictions of truth; and his words before his judges, "I must obey God rather than you," are the key-note of his character and his life. Marcus Aurelius, who, if he had been a Christian, would surely have been a Saint, was born into a corrupted atmosphere, and brought himself to believe it a duty to the Empire to persecute the Church. But, if his position exempted him from suffering at the hands of others, his *Meditations* contain abundant evi-

* Plat. *Rep.* ii. 65, 66; *cf.* Isaiah liii.

dence of inward struggles, and leave us no room to doubt that he would more willingly have borne, had it been his lot, that oppression which he unwillingly consented to inflict. To die for mankind, like Prometheus, who so strangely combines the characters of a rebel and a redeemer, the Miltonic ideal of Paradise Lost and Regained; or for one's country, like the popular heroes of Roman and Athenian legend; or for the sacred duties of kinship, like Antigone; or for one's friend, like Nisus for the young Euryalus in the Æneid, was the highest ideal of Pagan virtue.* And it foreshadowed, however imperfectly, a higher truth. It was, far more than the usage of animal sacrifice, so often quoted, the genuine though unconscious witness of the natural conscience, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." For sacrifice, apart from direct revelation, was little more at best than the rude expression of a want dimly felt. It told, indeed, of sin, but it might mean, like the ring of Polycrates, that too much happiness is not safe for man; or it might be the mere unreasoning fear of a superior power, or the perplexed sense of obligation to a law imperfectly fulfilled; or it might be degraded to the horrible conception of human sacrifice, as an offering acceptable to the Deity. It scarcely touches the *moral* element in the death of Christ. *Oblatus est quia Ipse voluit;* "He was *obedient* even unto death." And, accordingly, the Fathers regard even the Jewish ritual of bloody sacrifice chiefly as a temporary concession to human infirmity, ordained

* Origen (*Contra Celsum*) uses this analogy. Whether the usage of animal sacrifice was originally derived from revelation or from natural instinct, is a further question, not touched upon here.

through Moses, to withdraw the people from the service of devils; depreciated by the Prophets, to remind them of its intrinsic worthlessness. The mystic offering of Melchisedeck is, in patristic theology, the great type of the sacrifice of Christ.

It will not of course be imagined for a moment, that I suggest these illustrations as more than illustrations, or as in any sense adequate parallels of that which they nevertheless serve to adumbrate. So much at least they may prove in reply to objections, that there is no *prima facie* incongruity in the doctrine of redemption, from its having to be wrought out by the Redeemer's death. Christianity has not contradicted but endorsed the presentiments of natural religion, when it teaches by the acts, even more than by the words, of its Founder, that self-sacrifice for the good of others is the measure of our perfection, our highest law of life. "Pain," it has been truly said, "is the deepest thing we have in our nature, and union through pain has always seemed more holy and more real than any other." By those 'cords' of the first Adam the second bound us to Himself. Even those who believe Him not have owned their power;* how much more those who love Him! Would such a life as that of Eugénie de Guérin, to take no extreme case, be conceivable without the Passion?

It is further evident that if our redemption was to be not simply conceded, but purchased by toil and sacrifice, it could not be won by the redeemed them-

* Thus Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, p. 77): "His religion will for ever grow young again. *His sufferings will soften the best hearts;* all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there has not been born a greater than Jesus." Similar expressions abound in the book.

selves. Prophets and just men under the Old Law did and suffered much, to bear testimony to the truth; but their obedience, like their testimony, was imperfect. They were lifted up from the earth, but they did not draw all men to themselves. He alone could offer to the Creator a perfect oblation of the human will, to whom holiness belonged of inherent right. If men were to be delivered from their 'vain conversation,' from that thraldom of sense by which the corruptible body pressed down the incorruptible spirit, not merely by external teaching or threats of future judgment, but by the living witness of a nature identical with their own, yet with every motion of flesh or spirit brought into subjection to a higher law, then He alone could deliver them who was perfect man, yet 'did no sin.' And if the very method of deliverance was to be a measure of the ultimate consequence and tendencies, because a measure of the true character of sin, of the real and living energy of that evil principle from which men required to be set free, then He could only deliver them through submitting to their injustice, through bearing in His own body that death which was itself the culminating act and typical expression of their sin.* It is no answer to this to say, that we might have been delivered without any sacrifice at all. I have already admitted that, so far as we know, it is so; what I am urging now is that, if there was to be a sacrifice, we can conceive but one, because

* Thus the account of the atonement given by an estimable Protestant writer of our own day (the late Rev. F. W. Robertson) that Christ 'bore our sins,' because the collective wickedness of mankind spent itself upon Him in the Passion, is true as far as it goes, but not the whole truth. A somewhat similar explanation of the doctrine is given by the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies, in the Preface to his *Sermons on the Work of Christ*.

one alone is perfect. And it is in this sense, as we shall see, that those Fathers are to be understood who speak of the sacrifice of Christ being *necessary*. They always imply, what most of them expressly state, as do also the great majority of scholastic writers, that God might have delivered us by some other means; but they affirm that no other sacrifice could be adequate.* St. Anselm was the first to lay down a law of absolute necessity, and he does so on the professed ground, usually held to be untenable, that it was the most fitting means of effecting our reconciliation, and therefore God was bound to adopt it.

And here it may be well to repeat more distinctly, what was implied just now, that the satisfaction or atonement of Christ, with which we are at present concerned, is part, and part only, of the great work wrought out through the 'sacrament,' or as the Greek Fathers are wont to call it, 'economy' of the Incarnation. "The Word was made Flesh." That is the mystery which is the life and light of the Church, the centre of her worship and kernel of her creed; the mystery which angels desire to look into, and which sinners are permitted to adore in the abiding miracle of the Eucharist. Theologians usually make a threefold division of the causes or motives of the Incarnation.† As one motive they assign the glory of God,

* Petav. *De Incarn.* ii. 13. In the words of a modern theologian, whose loss we are still deploring, "It was no *necessity* which drove God to the redemption of the world by the Precious Blood. He might have redeemed it in unnumbered other ways. There is no limit to His power, no exhaustion to His wisdom .... The shedding of His Blood was part of the freedom of His love. It was, in some mysterious reality, the way of redemption most worthy of His blessed majesty, and also the way most likely to provoke the love of men."—Faber's *Precious Blood* (Richardson, 1860), pp. 27, 28.

† *Ib.* ii. 5.

in the manifestation of His attributes of power, sanctity, wisdom and goodness, which broke forth in the Person of Jesus, through their veil of flesh. A second motive is the benefit of man, and that in three ways: by redemption and sanctification, by teaching, and by example; and a third is the triumph over Satan. It is clear at first blush that all these motives, except the last, would have held good, under certain modifications, if men had never sinned. And accordingly one great school of theologians in the Church, whose theory receives a fresh sanction from the recent definition of the Immaculate Conception, and is also the most natural inference from the spirit if not the letter of patristic teaching, hold that if there had been no Fall, the Second Person in the Trinity would yet have taken our nature upon Him, and become our Brother. He would have come, of course, other than He actually came. He would not have come in a corruptible body; He would not have come to die. But He would have been, as now, our Teacher, our Pattern, our Mediator, the Second Adam, and Source of Grace; we should still have seen mirrored in His perfect Humanity the mind of God.* And thus, while the Incarnation formed part of the Divine purpose from the beginning, and the predestined Manhood of the Eternal Son was the archetype and model on which ours was formed, the Passion, so to say, was an afterthought, added because of transgressions; it was not the original motive of the decree, but affected the manner of its fulfilment. Whether or not, however, this theory be accepted—and it certainly seems most in accordance with the

* On the Mediation of Christ, as necessarily involved in the very fact of the Incarnation, see Wilberforce's *Doctrine of the Incarnation*, ch. vii.

tradition of the Church, and with what revelation would suggest to us of the love of God—it remains equally certain, that the Incarnation had objects not necessarily connected with the Fall, and even as regards our present fallen state had further ends besides that of satisfaction. Some of these are elaborately worked out by writers strongly opposed to the view referred to, such as Thomassin, who devotes the greater part of his first book on the Incarnation to setting forth the exhibition in the Person of the God-Man of the eternal law and the Divine attributes. The mediatorial office of Christ includes, besides and even before the notion of intercession and sacrifice, that of reconciliation, or 'making peace,' on which Scripture so constantly dwells, uniting man with God, giving peace from the internal conflict of passion in the human soul, and joining together those who are no more strangers and foreigners, Jew or Gentile, Greek or barbarian, but united in His one family, of whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named.*

It may be as well to add here, though for theological readers the remark would be superfluous, that the notion of 'imputation,' in the sense of a transfer, by a kind of juridical fiction, of our sins to Christ, and His Righteousness to His members, was first started in the sixteenth century, and must be kept quite distinct from the doctrine of atonement, on which it has been engrafted. It differs widely from the teaching of the Church on righteousness not imputed but imparted, which is expressed by the Council of Trent in language borrowed from St. Augustine, to the effect

* Petav. *De Inc.* xii. 6, 7.

that in crowning our merits God crowns His own gifts.* The Passion of Christ was not to be the substitute for our personal obedience, but the source of it. To justify is to *make*, not simply to account men just.

Once more, there is no hint in any Father, except St. Augustine and Fulgentius, of the notion that Christ died for some, or for the elect only, not for the whole race of mankind. There are no doubt traces of such a view to be found in St. Augustine's later writings, during the Pelagian controversy; and he was the first to explain St. Paul's words (Rom. ix. 21) of the 'mass of perdition' (φύραμα) from which only the predestined would be taken out. This idea of Christ dying for a chosen few re-appears, to support an argument which is however complete without it, in one passage of Abelard; it found distinct expression later, among the Reformed in the heresy of Calvin, among Catholics in the heresy of Jansenism. That God is no respecter of persons, but wills all men to be saved, and that Christ died for all, is, on the other hand, the constant teaching of the Church.

This leads to a further remark, which must be borne in mind throughout the ensuing examination of the writings of Fathers, Schoolmen, and later Catholic theologians. While the 'unanimous consent of the Fathers,' so far as it embodies the faith of the universal Church, is affirmed by the Council of Trent (Sess. vi.) to be an authoritative rule for the interpretation of Scripture, the individual opinions of any or even all of them can never constitute more than a strong *prima*

* *Conc. Trid.* Sess. vi. cap. 16; *cf.* Can. 11, 12, where the imputation of Christ's merits is denied to be the cause of our justification.

facie presumption in favour of the view adopted. And as regards later writers also, we may expect to find much variety in their way of handling points not defined by authority, and shall gain light from their very differences. To use the words of the great leader of the Catholic revival in Germany, "For a time even a *conception of a dogma*, or an opinion may be tolerably general, without however becoming an integral portion of a dogma, or a dogma itself. There are here eternally changing individual forms of an universal principle, which may serve this or that person, or a particular period for mastering that universal principle by way of reflection and speculation, forms which may possess more or less of truth, but whereon the Church pronounces no judgment; for the data for such a decision are wanting in tradition, and she abandons them altogether to the award of theological criticism." This is said with special reference to "Augustine's and Anselm's exposition of original sin, and the theory of the latter respecting the vicarious atonement of Christ."* The Church of God was to be 'clothed in raiment of many colours' *(circumamicta varietatibus)*, and unity in diversity is among her predicted glories. The different and even mistaken or imperfect aspects under which the same truth may present itself to different minds do but serve to bring out the more clearly, in the long run, its vital unity and coherence.† It must be remembered, too, as one reason why this particular

* Möhler's *Symbolism*, Eng. Tr. vol. i. p. 11.

†. "Dass aber in dieser nur durch Irrthümer hindurch der Weg zur Wahrheit führe, ist ein Gesetz, welches in der Zukunft eben so gelten wird, wie es in der Vergangenheit sich bewährt hat."—*Die Vergangenheit und Gegenwart der katholischen Theologie*, von J. von Döllinger. Regensburg, 1863.

doctrine of the atonement has not been so fully treated as many others by Catholic writers, that it never formed the subject of any specific heresy before the Reformation, and did not even then become a prominent topic of controversy, partly from internal differences among the Reformers themselves about it, partly from the more immediate practical interest at the time of questions about Church authority and the Sacraments. We shall have occasion, however, to notice the treatment of the question by the leading Protestant divines, with the earliest of whom it acquired a new shape and significance, and became a fruitful source of misconceptions.

Thousands and tens of thousands, I know, have knelt in loving adoration before the Crucified, who never attempted to reason about the crucifixion; they felt what it meant, though they could not put their meaning into words, or were content to use such words only as those of a popular English hymn:

> "I cannot understand the woe
> Which Thou wast pleased to bear;
> *O dying Lamb, I do but know*
> *That all my hopes are there.*"

Far be it from us to blame them. Doubtless there is more to be learnt from the crucifix than all the wisdom of all the theologians can teach us. Yet the mysteries of revelation were given to be food for the intellect, as well as for the heart; and, moreover, the questionings of heresy which have fixed the form, have troubled the unconscious simplicity of our early faith. Such scriptural statements as that "the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep," or that "the Son of

Man came to give His life a ransom instead of many," or that "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins," or that "God having sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," or that "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive;" "as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, by the obedience of One the many shall be made righteous:"* these and the like passages contain a depth and richness of meaning which no meditation can exhaust; but they also suggest many difficult questions which successive writers and schools, as well within as without the Church, have variously answered. Such an inquiry as the present is not, therefore, a needless one. Only let us never forget, amid the maze of theological speculations, the one grand lesson of the Passion, *Amor meus crucifixus est.*

* John x. 11; Matt. xx. 28; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Rom. viii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 22; Rom. v. 19.

CHAPTER II.

THE ANTE-NICENE FATHERS.

As a general rule, the rise of successive heresies is the occasion and measure of dogmatic statements of the faith. We do not, therefore, look in the Ante-Nicene Fathers for any elaborate discussion of questions not yet brought into controversy. Even on the central doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, we know how halting and inadequate, to use the mildest terms, their language frequently is, before the Arian, Sabellian, Monophysite, and Nestorian heresies had forced out into bolder relief the contrary definitions of the Church, as has been conclusively shown by Petavius, and not disproved though disputed in the *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ* of Bp. Bull.* Neither, again,

* Petav. *De Trin.* i. 3-5. No candid critic in the present day would deny the substantial correctness of Petavius's estimate. If he errs, it is rather in exaggerating than in depreciating the accuracy of theological statement in the early Greek Fathers, especially as regards the doctrines of grace. It is no disparagement to the general merits of the *Defensio* to say that the learned author has sometimes allowed himself to become too much of a special pleader,—a common fault of his day among theologians. A recent Anglican writer observes: "I am bound to state candidly, that, while I sympathize with the intention of Bull, I incline practically to the judgments of Petavius. It requires a thorough-going advocate to accept Bull's expurgated edition of Ante-Nicene theology." Owen's *Introd. to the Study of Dogmatic Theology.* London, 1858.

can we reasonably expect to find in earlier writers that precision of theological statement which only came into vogue when theology, partly in the conflict with error, partly through the influence of Greek philosophy at Alexandria, began to be formed into a science. On the subject of the atonement, the Ante-Nicene Fathers do not, with the exception of Irenæus and Origen, propound any definite theory. The word 'Satisfaction' they never use, or use, if at all, of the satisfaction of the penitent, not of Christ;* nor was the idea, as afterwards explained, familiar to them. But they speak, in connexion with the Incarnation, and in general terms, often borrowed directly or indirectly from the language of Scripture, of the sufferings, the death, the blood, the obedience, and the sacrifice of Christ, as being offered for us, and being the means of our redemption. It is from passages of this kind that we must gather their teaching on the subject; and, to present a clear and consistent view of it, a fuller employment of detailed references and quotations will be needful than in the case of more systematic writers, whose opinions can be fairly summed up in an analysis. I will do my best, however, to avoid burdening the reader with more of lengthened quotations than is really requisite, and to select such passages only as will in each case give a fair and adequate specimen of the writer's method of handling the question. We shall afterwards be in a position to draw some inferences, as to the general drift of patristic teaching as a whole, and its relations to later theology.

* It is used in this sense by Tertullian and Cyprian. There is no *word* for it in the Greek.

First in order come the apostolic Fathers, St. Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Hermas, St. Polycarp, and St. Ignatius; but their writings will not detain us long.

We have two *Epistles of Clement*, to the Church at Corinth, on practical disputes which had arisen there, only dealing quite incidentally with any questions of doctrine. He is distinct in asserting, that the blood of Christ is the means of bestowing on us redemption and grace, and that by the will and through the love of God. "In love the Master received us; through the love He had for us Christ our Lord gave His blood for us, by the will of God, and His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls." And again, "Let us look then to the blood of Christ, and behold how precious is His blood to God, since it was shed for our salvation, and has procured for the whole world the grace of repentance."* Clement makes the scarlet cord let down by Rahab a type of the blood of Christ; and speaks of Him as our High Priest, according to the constant usage of the Fathers. The universality of redemption, and the death of Christ as the source of grace, are here clearly laid down.

Let us turn to the *General Epistle of Barnabas*, which, though not by the apostle of that name, nor indeed a writing of the first century, appeared early in the second, at Alexandria. We read, in the seventh chapter, of Christ offering the vessel of His soul (*i. e.* His body) as a sacrifice for our sins; and of Isaac's sacrifice as a type: the writer also dwells, as do others afterwards, on the type of the two goats, one of which was sacrificed, and the other made a scape-goat, being ac-

* Clem. Rom. *Ep. ad Cor.* l. xlix. 7.

cursed, as Christ was accursed, by the people, not by God. He speaks again of Christ suffering, that the strokes inflicted on Him may give life to us, and "that we may be sanctified by the remission of sins, that is, the sprinkling of His blood," of which the blood of the Passover was a figure. In one passage of chapter fourteenth we seem to have the first notice of the conquest over Satan, where it is said, in manifest allusion to Col. i. 13, "He ransomed from darkness our souls, given over to death and lawless wanderings;" but of this theory we shall have to speak later.

The *Shepherd of Hermas*, which used at one time to be ranked with the New Testament Scriptures, contains but a single reference to the redemption wrought by Christ, occurring in a parable about a vineyard, representing the people of God, where His Son is set to work as a servant, and is said to have 'laboured much and suffered much that He might do away their sins,' and afterwards to have 'pointed out to them the way of life by giving them the law, received from His Father;'* thus connecting the forgiveness of sins especially with His obedience and His teaching.

In the *Epistles of Ignatius* there are several references, in general terms, to the sufferings of Christ for us. In the *Epistle to Smyrna* the writer says: "Christ suffered for us (δι' ἡμᾶς) that we might be saved, and suffered really;" and he calls the Eucharist "that flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for (ὑπὲρ) our sins, which the Father in His goodness raised."† In the account of his martyrdom there is

* *Pastor.* lib. iii, 8im. 5.

† Ignat. *Ep. ad Smyrn.* i. 7. *Ep. ad Ephes.* i.

a distinct reference to the triumph over Satan by the Cross of Christ, as alluded to by St. Paul,* when he is made to speak of our Lord as "Him that crucified my sin *with him who invented it*, and condemned all demoniacal error and wickedness, putting it under the feet of those who carry Him in their heart." He also calls Christ a High Priest.

The last apostolic Father to be noticed here is St. Polycarp. In his *Epistle to the Philippians*, he says that Christ 'persevered even unto death for our sins, whom God raised, having loosed the pains of Hell;' and again, in language moulded on St. Peter's, says: "He bore our sin in His own body to the tree, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, but He endured all for our sakes, that we might live in Him;"† thus connecting the gift of life with His sufferings for us. Further on he calls Christ 'the eternal High Priest.'

One more document of the first century may be quoted: the *Epistle to Diognetus*, which has been erroneously ascribed to Justin Martyr. It contains a passage of importance, as showing that the writer had no notion of that divergence of will between the Persons of the Holy Trinity, which has sometimes been so strangely imported into the doctrine of the Atonement; as though the mind of the Father towards us were actually changed by the Sacrifice of Christ. I will give it in full, translating from the Greek. "God, the Master and Maker of all things, who created all things and disposed them in order, was not only a Lover of man, but also long-suffering; and He,

* Col. ii. 15; *cf.* Heb. ii. 14.

† Polycarp. *Ep. ad Phil.* i. 8.

indeed, was always such, and will be, gracious and good, and without anger (ἀόργητος), and true; and He alone is good, and conceived the great and ineffable design which He communicated only to His Son." And again: "When our iniquity was full, and it was perfectly manifest that punishment and death were the expected recompense ..... He did not hate or repulse us, or think evil of us, but was long-suffering and bore with us, and took our sins upon Him (ἀνεδέξατο); He Himself gave up His Son as a ransom for us, the Holy for the unholy, the Sinless for the sinful, the Righteous for the unrighteous, the Incorruptible for the corruptible, the Immortal for the mortal. For what else but His righteousness could cover our sins? by whom could we, the lawless and impious, be justified, but only by the Son of God? O sweet change! O unsearchable work! O unexpected benefits! that the wickedness of many should be covered by one Righteous One, the righteousness of One justify many sinners!" I will merely observe, to preclude a possible misconception, that it would be to ignore the whole tenor of patristic theology, if we supposed the imputation theory was intended in the concluding words. It is clearly a real change *in ourselves* that is spoken of, from sin to holiness, through the imparted grace of Christ.

St. Justin Martyr, the great Christian apologist of the second century, is naturally led in his dispute with the Jew Trypho to enlarge on the death of Christ. He does not, however, construct any systematic theory on the subject; but his statements are important as incidentally contradicting some later theories. He speaks generally of Christ being incarnated, 'that He might

be partaker of our sufferings, and heal them;' but, in commenting on the great prophecy of the Passion (Is. liii.), he does not, like Luther afterwards, explain "the discipline of our peace was upon Him," * of Christ being punished by God for our sins; and, so far from explaining Gal. iii. 13, of the curse of God resting upon Christ, he says expressly that it was by the Jews He was accursed: "Ye maintain that He was rightly crucified, and an enemy of God and accursed, which is a work of your unreasonable judgment." And, again, more definitely: "The curse of the law lies upon crucified men, but the curse of God *does not lie upon Christ*, through whom He saves those worthy of curse;" and the Jews are reproached with calling Him accursed whom God willed to take our curses upon Him, meaning to raise Him from the dead. There are other passages to the same effect; and the example of the scape-goat is explained, as by Barnabas before and Tertullian afterwards, of the curses of the *people* being laid upon Christ. Justin frequently alludes, as do nearly all writers after Ignatius, to the conquest over Satan as a consequence of the Passion, and in one passage, where he speaks of Christ having acquired possession of men (κτησάμενος) by blood and the 'mystery of His Cross,' he may even seem to hint at the view of a price paid to Satan, which we shall have to notice later, in dealing with Irenæus and Origen. He speaks of the restoration of our fallen nature through Christ, who suffered 'to deliver us from the wickedness in which we were born,' and of His blood 'delivering

* In the Septuagint, where Justin uses παιδεία εἰρήνης ἡμῶν. disciplina pacis nostræ, *Vulg.* The references are to the *Dialogue against Trypho*, and the *Apologia*.

those who believe on Him,' quoting the usual types of the Paschal sprinkling and Rahab's scarlet thread; and calls Him 'a chosen Priest, and eternal King,' fulfilling the type of Melchisedec.

Clement of Alexandria may be regarded as the forerunner of that great theological school, taking its name from his native city, of which Origen was properly the founder. He does not, however, speak on this question with any special fulness or precision, and adds little to what had already been said by others. The sufferings of Christ are attributed to His exceeding love for man; He is 'a Sacrifice acceptable to God;'* and is elsewhere called 'the Passover sacrificed (καλλιερενθεὶς) by the Jews.' The conquest over the serpent, whose form is taken to symbolize sensual pleasure, is spoken of in language which deserves to be quoted: "How did pleasure prevail? Man, who had been set free by simplicity, was found bound to sins; the Lord wished to release him again from his chains; and being bound to flesh (a Divine mystery), in this He overcame the serpent, and took captive the tyrant and death, and, what is strangest, with hands stretched out [on the cross] showed man set free who had been led astray by pleasure, and chained to corruption. O mystical wonder! The Lord lay down, and man rose; and he who was cast out of Paradise receives heaven, a greater prize than his obedience could have won."† The last words, which sound like an echo of the *O felix culpa* chanted in the Paschal anthem, are the earliest distinct intimation, so far as I am aware, of our having gained more by the Incarnation than we had lost by the Fall.

* Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 7, *Pædag.* 5.
† Ib. *Protr.* 69.

It will be observed, that the *obedience* of Christ is the point here chiefly dwelt upon, and to which the victory over the evil one and our redemption is ascribed. Elsewhere the writer says that He 'changed the sunset to the sunrise, and by His cross turned death into life;'* and again (*Pæd.* 2.): "The blood of the Lord is twofold, the fleshly by which we were redeemed from corruption, and the spiritual by which we were anointed;" and, lastly, Jesus is said to pray for men as the Great High Priest of God.

Some fragments only remain of Claudius Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the second century. He calls our Lord, "the Great Sacrifice, the Son of God instead of the Paschal Lamb, who was bound and bound the strong one (Satan), who was judged being Judge of quick and dead, who was delivered into the hands of sinners to be crucified, who poured from His side the two things which cleanse, water and blood, mind and spirit" (λόγον και πνεῦμα). This accords, as far as it goes, with contemporary writers, but obviously the passage is rather rhetorical than dogmatic.

There is nothing specially bearing on our subject in the writings of the apologists Tatian, Athenagoras, and Theophilus. And so we pass from the second to the third century, and from the Eastern to the Western Church. I have purposely passed over Irenæus, whose treatment of the question shall be examined with Origen's, to which it bears a close resemblance, at the end of this chapter.

We come thus to Tertullian, the great Latin writer

* οὗτος τὴν δύσιν εἰς ἀνατολὴν μετήγαγεν, καὶ τὸν θάνατον εἰς ζωὴν ἀνεσταύρωσεν.

of the early part of the third century. And it may be worth observing, that, from his having before his conversion been famous as a jurist, he, if any one, would be likely to put forward the juridical theory of satisfaction, which at a later period commended itself so strongly to the legal mind of Grotius. That he does not even allude to it, is a crucial evidence of its being as yet unknown. And this is made clearer by his frequently using, and being the first to use, the word satisfaction; but always, as has been already stated, in reference to the acts of the penitent, not the work of Christ. On the other hand, in disputing with the Jews, he is careful to explain Gal. iii. 13, like Justin Martyr, of the curses laid on Christ by His people, not by God. He insists, that those hung on a tree are said in Deuteronomy to be cursed only on account of the sins for which they are hung there, which cannot of course apply to Christ, 'who spoke no guile, and displayed all righteousness and humility.'* He says that Christ was made 'a sacrifice for all nations, being led as a sheep to the slaughter,' quoting also the types of Isaac, and the scape-goat, which latter he explains in the same sense as Barnabas and Justin had done before him. Moses, stretching out his arms during the battle against Amalek, is given as a type of Christ's triumphs over Satan, and also the brazen serpent. The Origenist notion of a ransom paid to Satan is perhaps hinted at when it is said, "The Lord

* Tertul. *Contra Judæos* 10. He elsewhere says *(Contra Prax.)* that the apostle would have 'blasphemed' had he called Christ cursed in any other sense. On the other hand, Luther remarks, with characteristic bluntness, "Every one hung on the tree is cursed of God: Christ was hung on the tree, therefore Christ is cursed of God."

redeemed him from the angelic powers who hold the world, the spiritual things of wickedness, the darkness of this world, from eternal judgment and perpetual death;" but it may be merely a reference to Eph. vi. 12. The bestowal of a new life and restoration of the lost image of God, through the crucifixion, is clearly laid down: "What plainer than the sacrament of this wood.....that what had perished in Adam might be restored by the tree (cross) of Christ." His obedience, persevering to the last moment of life, is dwelt upon, and His being 'the Pontiff of the uncircumcised priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec.'*

There is not much of special importance for our subject in the writings of Hippolytus. He speaks of Christ's priesthood, and sacrifice of Himself as a sweet-smelling savour to God; of His perfect obedience and fulfilling all the righteousness of the law; of His enduring the cross by the consent (συγχωρήσει) of God; of His priesthood and royalty. Two passages may be given here. The first seems to point to Irenæus' theory: "For this cause the God of all things became man, that by suffering in passible flesh He might ransom our whole race, which was sold to death; and, working marvels through the instrumentality of the flesh, by His impassible Godhead, might bring it back to His pure and blessed life, from which it had fallen by obeying the Devil."† The other passage is a comment on Prov. ix. 1: "He has given us His divine flesh and precious blood to eat and drink, for the remission of sins."

St. Cyprian's treatment of the question follows Ter-

* Ib. 13, 14, 10. *De Fuga*, 12. *Contr. Jud.* 13. *Contr. Marcion.* iv. 42, v. 9.
† Hippol. *De Theol. et Incarn.* II.

tullian's more closely than that of any other writer. There is no attempt to theorize; the word satisfaction is used, as by Tertullian, of the penitent, not of Christ. The following passage expresses the writer's general view of the work of redemption: "This grace Christ imparts, this gift of His mercy He bestows by subduing death through the triumph of the cross, redeeming the believer by the price of His blood, reconciling men to God the Father, giving life to the mortal by heavenly regeneration." He speaks elsewhere of our sins being 'cleansed by the blood and the sanctification of Christ;' of His eternal priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, and of His earthly priests representing Him, and 'offering a true and full sacrifice in the Church to God the Father,' in allusion to Prov. ix.* He quotes Moses prevailing over Amalek as a type of our Lord's victory over Satan, and repeatedly speaks of our being redeemed and vivified by His blood.

One passage shall be quoted here from the *Homily on the Cross*, by Methodius, bishop of Tyre, who was martyred in the Diocletian persecution. It speaks of the victory over Satan as achieved through Christ's obedience unto death, and His arming us to overcome him in our own persons. "For this cause chiefly was the cross introduced, being set up as a trophy and terror against iniquity, that from henceforth man might be no more subject to wrath, having conquered back (ἀναπαλαίσαντα) what he had lost by disobedience, and having lawfully overcome the powers below, and been made free of all debt by the gifts of God. For

* Cypr. *Ad Demetrium.* Ib. *Epist.* 63.

this the first-born Word of the righteous God, having armed man, in whose nature He tabernacled, put down the powers which had enslaved us, through the form of the cross, as has been said, and with outstretched hands set free man who was in the bondage of corruption."*

Before proceeding to notice the special theories of Irenæus and Origen, the only writers of this early period who can strictly be said to have constructed any theory on the subject, we may pause to sum up briefly the main points of teaching on Christ's work of redemption to be gathered from the patristic literature of the first three centuries as a whole. And first, as to what it does not contain. There is no trace, as we have seen, of the notion of vicarious satisfaction, in the sense of our sins being imputed to Christ and His obedience imputed to us, which some of the Reformers made the very essence of Christianity; or, again, of the kindred notion that God was angry with His Son for our sakes, and inflicted on Him the punishment due to us; nor is Isaiah's prophecy interpreted in this sense, as afterwards by Luther; on the contrary there is much which expressly negatives any such views. There is no mention of the justice of God, in the forensic sense of the word; the Incarnation is invariably and exclusively ascribed to His love; the term satisfaction does not occur in this connection at all, and where Christ is said to suffer for us, ὑπὲρ (not ἀντί) is the word always used.† It is not the payment of a

* *Hom. de Cruce Fragm.* 1.

† We shall find the two, however, used interchangeably in one passage of Irenæus, as they are also by St. Paul in 1 Timothy ii. 6: ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων. Cf. Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45.

debt, as in the *Cur Deus Homo*, but the restoration of our fallen nature that is prominent in the minds of the writers, as the main object of the Incarnation. They always speak, with Scripture, of our being reconciled to God, not of God being reconciled to us. On the other hand, they are far removed from the modern Socinian or Rationalistic view, which sees in the death of Christ *only* an attestation of His teaching, or an exalted model of heroic virtue, or a practical evidence of the love of God. They ascribe, with one voice, a real and most vital efficacy to the 'sacrifice' of Calvary in restoring us to life and immortality, but without attempting any precise explanation of *how* the result is brought about. The obedience of Christ is emphatically dwelt upon, as an integral part of His redeeming work, but a special virtue is assigned to His 'death,' and His 'blood,' the latter being occasionally, as by Hippolytus and Irenæus, mentioned in connection with the Eucharistic chalice. His abiding priesthood in heaven is continually dwelt on, while some, as Cyprian, insist also on its earthly realization, through the ministry of His appointed representatives. Barnabas and Ignatius are the first to speak of His conquest over Satan, which assumes an increasing prominence in subsequent writers. In the hands of two it becomes the basis of a distinct theory of satisfaction, and to these we must now turn our attention.

St. Irenæus treats the question mainly in connection with two passages of the New Testament: Rom. v. 19, "As by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall the many be made righteous," and Hebrews ii. 14, where 'destroying him that hath the power over death, that is the

Devil' is set forth as the object of the Incarnation. And he accordingly makes the work of redemption consist principally in two points: the restoration of our corrupted nature through the gift of a new principle of divine life, and the triumph over Satan. It is in the exposition of the second point that his teaching goes beyond that of his contemporaries, and contains the first explicit statement of an opinion which continued for a thousand years to influence Christian theology, till it was finally sifted and discarded by Anselm (who has been followed by later writers, with a few exceptions) on the obvious ground, that, though we had justly incurred punishment at the hands of the Evil One, he could have no right over us but by the permission of God.* The original suggestion of this theory came from the Gnostic heresy. Irenæus ascribed to the Evil Spirit that power over men, as their seducer, which Gnosticism gave him as their Demiurgus or Creator. They had voluntarily placed themselves under the Devil's power; and, though God might have delivered them by force, it was more accordant with justice to compensate, by a perfect obedience, that original disobedience from which all his rights over them were derived. I will extract, at length, the passage in which Irenæus introduces his view.

"The powerful Word and true Man reasonably redeeming us by His blood, gave Himself a ransom for those who had been led into captivity. And since the apostacy (*i. e.* Satan) unjustly ruled us, and when we belonged by nature to Almighty God, alienated us

* Quamvis enim homo juste a diabolo torqueretur, ipse tamen illum injuste torquebat. Anselm. *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 7.

against nature, and made us his own disciples, the Word of God, being all-powerful and not wanting in justice, dealt justly even with the apostacy itself, buying back from it that which was His own; not violently, as he (Satan) had first gained dominion over us, by snatching greedily what did not belong to him, but by persuasion [by a method which convinced Satan his rights were at an end*] as it became God to receive what He willed by persuasion and not by force, so that neither might justice be violated, nor God's ancient creation perish. The Lord, therefore, redeemed us by His own blood, and gave His soul for (ὑπὲρ) our souls, and His flesh for (ἀντί) our flesh, and poured out the Spirit of the Father for the union and communion of God and man, bringing down God to men through the Spirit, raising men to God through His Incarnation, and firmly and truly giving us incorruption in His advent, through communion with God."† For this redemption from Satan's mastery there was required a perfect obedience; 'compensating our disobedience through His obedience;' and hence in one passage Irenæus says, the price of our disobedience in Adam was paid by Christ's obedience in the Three Temptations; a statement which, I think, stands alone in patristic literature.‡ This perfect obedience could only be rendered by Him who was both God and man: "For if Man had not conquered the adversary of man, he would not have been justly conquered. And, again,

* This seems to be the obvious meaning, and not, as some understand it, 'by persuading men.'

† Lib. v. 1.

‡ Et tertio itaque vincens eum de reliquo repulit a semet ipso quasi legitime victum; et *soluta est ea quæ fuerat in Adam præcepti prævaricatio, per præceptum legis quod servavit Filius hominis*, non transgrediens præceptum Dei. Ib. 21.

if God had not given salvation, we should not have had it securely; and unless man were united with God we could not partake of incorruption."* Hence the Incarnation was necessary, that a perfect obedience might be offered, but the obedience of a man. Yet this obedience was not the means but the condition only of redemption; that had to be won by the Redeemer's death.† But how the Devil, to whom this death is ascribed, came to accomplish an act so fatal to himself; whether, as the Gnostics hold, from being deceived as to who Christ really was, or not; and again, what exactly was the connecting link between the Redeemer's conflict with Satan and His death, and how this last brought about our redemption—all this Irenæus leaves unexplained. He certainly regards Christ's death not as a punishment inflicted by God, but as the work of Satan, and temporal death itself rather as a blessing than a curse, introduced at the fall of man, to limit his opportunities of sin.‡ On our deliverance from death, and him who has power over it, follows the restoration of our corrupted nature: "In His incarnation and manhood He recapitulated in Himself the long series of mankind.....that we might recover in Christ what we had lost in Adam, being made after the image and similitude of God."§ There is no

* Lib. iii. 18. 6. Cf. also v. 1. *οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν ἀληθῶς σαρκα καὶ αἷμα ἐσχηκὼς, ἓἰ ὧν ἡμᾶς ἐξηγοράσατο, εἰ μὴ τὴν ἀρχαίαν πλάσιν τοῦ Ἀδὰμ εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀνακεφαλαιώσατο.*

† Pro nobis mortuus est et sanguine Suo nos redemit. iii. 16. 9.

‡ Prohibuit autem ejus transgressionem, interponens mortem, et cessare faciens peccatum, finem inferens ei per carnis resolutionem, quæ fieret in terra. iii. 23, 6.

§ iii. 18. 1. Cf. v. 16, 1. There is an allusion to the distinction drawn between the *image* and *likeness* of God; the former representing the perfect type of humanity (or what the schoolmen call the 'integrity of nature'), the latter the superadded gift of grace, or 'original justice.' (See Clem. Alex. *Strom.* ii. 180,

need to dwell on those aspects of the author's teaching which are shared by his contemporaries.

Where Irenæus had left the question in the second century, Origen, who, notwithstanding his eccentricities, is justly styled the 'Father of theology,' took it up in the third; and what before had been an uncertain and fragmentary hypothesis assumes, under his creative touch, shape and consistency. With his peculiar views on the preëxistence and successive metempsychoses of souls, on the final absorption of all bodily natures (including apparently our Lord's)* into the Divine essence, the extension of the efficacy of redemption to the whole creation in heaven and earth, and the ἀποκατάστασις, or ultimate restitution of all fallen spirits, human or angelic, we need not here concern ourselves. Nor is it necessary to dwell on those parts of his teaching about redemption which do not materially differ from what has been already noticed in previous or contemporary Fathers. And in dealing with so voluminous a writer it will, of course, be impossible to point out all, or nearly all, the passages bearing on our more immediate subject; it must suffice to refer to such critical statements as supply an adequate exhibition of his manner of handling it.

Origen regards the redeeming work of Christ, as a whole, under five aspects. It includes His teaching, as the revelation of absolute truth; His works, as cleansing the temple, and especially His miracles, to

and the Fathers *passim*.) There is also a reference to the idea of Christ's predestined humanity being the image on which ours was modelled. 'Ad imaginem Dei fecit hominem, *scilicet Christi*.' Tertull. *adv. Prax.* 12. cf. Petav. *De Trin.* vi. 6.

* Orig. *De Princip.* iii. 6, 1.; ii. 3, 3.

which a symbolical meaning is attached; His life as the great Example; His sufferings and death, to which is ascribed a threefold efficacy, in our redemption from the power of Satan, our reconciliation with God, and the purification of our corrupted nature; and, lastly, His continual priesthood in heaven, which is constantly and emphatically dwelt upon, and whereby He who on earth poured out His material blood for us, is said 'to offer the vital virtue of His body as a kind of spiritual sacrifice.'* Origen's views under the fourth head, as to the efficacy of Christ's death, are what contain the specialities of his theory on the atonement. He considers that death a necessity, both for our ransom from Satan and as a Sacrifice for sin.

Let us take each point in order. It was left unexplained by Irenæus how the Evil One came to undermine his own kingdom by procuring the death of Jesus; in Origen's system this is clear enough. It was, in fact, but part of that great conflict between good and evil, of which this world had from the first been the theatre, and which found its consummation in the death of Christ. From the Fall onwards, the dragon and his angels had fought with man, and had seemed to prevail against him. Again and again prophets and righteous men had risen up, to bear witness for truth and holiness; and again and again the world, at the instigation of Satan, had crucified its benefactors. But he had overreached himself. The fathers slew the prophets, and the children built their sepulchres; the blood of the martyrs became the seed-plot

* Ib. *In Joann.* i. 2: ἑαυτὸν γὰρ εὐαγγελίζεται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. *Hom. in Matt.* xvi. 20; xii. 36. *Contr. Cels.* i. 68. *Hom. in Rom.* iii. 7-21. *Hom. in Levit.* i. 3.

of the Church. Within and without the immediate sphere of divine revelation this contest had been carried on.* The crisis came at last, and once more the Evil One deceived himself. He had obtained rights over men: a price, an equivalent (ἀντάλλαγμα) was due to him, to free them from his power; and they had none to pay. "Man has nothing to give as an equivalent for his soul;" and therefore, "One alone was able to pay a price for our lost soul, He who bought us with His own precious blood."† Origen sometimes speaks of this as a kind of bargain with Satan; but he does not mean, as we shall see, that the bargain was made or accepted willingly. To the question suggested by Matt. xvii. 22, *By whom* was the Lord given into the hands of men? he replies, "Not all gave Him up with the same design. God delivered Him out of love for the human race (Rom. viii. 32). But others delivered Him up with evil intent, each according to his own wickedness; Judas for avarice, the priests for envy, the Devil from fear, lest by His teaching the human race should be snatched out of his hands, *not perceiving that the human race was to be still more delivered by His death than it had been by His teaching and miracles.*"‡ Here and elsewhere Origen expressly asserts what Irenæus had left doubtful, that Satan was deceived, and thought by slaying our Lord to get pos-

* See *Contr. Cels.* i. 31; vii. 17; viii. 44.

† Cf. *Tom. in Matt.* xiii. 581. Origen speaks sometimes of Christ's blood as the price paid, sometimes of His *Soul*, the reality of which he was the first to bring prominently forward. But he here distinguishes, in what sense is not very clear, the Soul of Christ from His Spirit, which He commended into the hands of His Father. He certainly does *not* mean by soul, as Thomasius thinks (*Origines*, p. 223), the blood or physical life, for he speaks expressly of its going down to Hades. *Tom.* xvi. 8.

‡ *Tom.* xxxv. 75.

session of His soul, and secure the empire over man which he thus by his own act unwittingly dissolved; for the Soul of Jesus he could not hold in Hades (Ps. xv. 11). This deceiving of Satan is even directly ascribed to God, who thereby used him as the blind instrument for destroying his own power,* but by what means he was thus deceived, and how again this delusion on his part agrees with the idea of a price paid and a bargain struck with him, is left as yet unexplained.

The death of Christ is further viewed by Origen as an atoning sacrifice, and is in this sense, too, declared to be necessary. "It was necessary that a victim should be provided for sin."† The question has been raised, whether he taught the theory of vicarious satisfaction, as afterwards understood. There are certainly scattered through his writings expressions, which might at first sight seem like anticipations of such a view; and he explains the famous prophecy (Is. liii. 5), 'the discipline of our peace was upon Him,' unlike earlier writers, of the 'chastisement due to us for our discipline and recovery of peace being laid upon' Christ, not, however, as a retributive punishment, but a remedial chastisement.‡ That chastisement, inflicted by the hands of men, he invariably ascribes not to the wrath or vindictive justice, but to the love of God for men. Christ suffered, indeed, in our place, and for our deserts; but it was because His suffering had

* *In Matt. Tom.* xiii. 9.

† *In Num. Hom.* xxiv. 1. Cf. *Tom. in Joann.* xxviii. 393.

‡ *Tom. in Joann.* xviii. 1. κόλασις not ποίνη. That Origen did not hold the theory of vicarious punishment is quite clear. Compare Redepenning's *Origenes*, vol. ii. p. 408, *sqq.*, and Bähr's *Lehre der Kirche vom Tode Jesu* (Sulzbach, 1832), pp. 123-128, and 151-154, with the passages quoted.

become the only means of securing our reformation, and thus delivering us from eternal death.* His sacrifice resembled in kind, though it transcended infinitely in degree, the sacrifices of those who have prefigured or imitated Him in laying down their life for their fellows. As the first-born of Egypt died that Israel might be saved; as apostles and martyrs have sealed their testimony with their blood; so, but far more perfectly, He who alone was sinless laid down His life for sinners, the one true and sufficient sacrifice of obedience to the will of God.† He suffered at sinners' hands that temporal death, which had been under the Law the penalty of sin, but which, since He has consecrated by enduring it, is changed into a salutary penance, to be willingly, nay thankfully, accepted in conformity with His example, and as the path to eternal life.‡ Wherein consists the especial connection between His obedience to God and the sacrifice of the cross, and how it is reconciled with that other necessity of a satisfaction to Satan, or how again the sinless soul of Jesus could be a price paid to the Evil One—these are difficulties which Origen does not solve. But he clears up much which had been left undetermined by Irenæus, and gives to the death of Christ, as the great act of obedience, and culminating point in that struggle of good against evil which had marked all along the history of mankind, a deeper moral significance than is exhibited by any previous writer.

To our former summary of the teaching of the first three centuries we must now add the full and distinct

* *Serm. in Matt.* 904. *Tom. in Joann.* xxviii. 393.

† *Tom. in Matt.* xii. 546. *In Joann.* xxviii. 393.

‡ *Hom. in Levit.* xiv. 4. *Serm. in Matt.* 912.

enunciation of what before had been intimated or implied, but never systematically expounded: the necessity or quasi-necessity of satisfying Satan's claim, as a matter of justice; or, to use the language employed by those who maintain this opinion, of a ransom being paid to him for the souls of men. The necessity of a sacrifice to God is also dwelt upon by Origen, but its grounds are left undeveloped, though clearly not understood in the sense of St. Anselm. The perpetual priesthood of Christ in heaven, which occupies a prominent place in nearly all the writings we have examined, is even more emphatically insisted upon by Origen. And this deserves to be remembered, because it is a part of the doctrine which has been almost or altogether dropped out of many Protestant expositions of the atonement, whereas those most inclining among Catholics to a merely juridical view of the subject have never been able to forget the present and living reality of a sacrifice constantly kept before their eyes, as it were, in the worship which reflects on earth the unfailing liturgy of heaven.

CHAPTER III.

THE LATER FATHERS AND JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA.

As we pass from the third to the fourth century, from the age of persecutions and apologies to the age of controversies and councils, of systematic theology and definite creeds, a change comes over the whole literature of the Church. It becomes at once fuller, and in some sense more exact. The number of writers is multiplied, both in East and West, and their works grow more voluminous. We can no longer examine in detail the statements of each Father, as during the earlier centuries, nor is there the same reason for doing so. Throughout the whole period, from the fourth century to the time of St. Anselm, two tendencies, divergent but not necessarily contradictory (for both often appear in the same writer) manifest themselves in the treatment of the question before us, and the passages bearing on it may accordingly be grouped under one or other of two classes. We have found both these lines of thought exhibited in Origen's theological system; succeeding writers were occupied in their development.

First and chiefly, we have seen that Origen regards the death of our Lord as a ransom paid for our deliver-

ance from the power of Satan; and the three ideas involved in this theory, and expressly insisted on by him—of an actual right over us acquired by the Devil through sin, which could not justly be rescinded without some adequate compensation; of the deceit practised upon him, by which he was made the instrument of his own discomfiture; and of the necessity for the death of Christ as the only sufficient ransom—form the basis of its treatment by later Fathers, who labour to harmonize what had seemed inconsistent, and to clear up what was left uncertain in the original statement. It was shown, on the other hand, that Origen like his predecessors taught, that our Lord's death was a sacrifice offered to God, though he does not explain why this sacrifice was needed, or how it was at the same time a satisfaction to the Devil. This view also is developed in the writers who followed him; but the notion of a ransom paid to Satan continues to be the common explanation of the necessity for Christ's death till Anselm's time, finding indeed its last express utterance in Peter Lombard. We may proceed, therefore, to examine the patristic literature of this period as treating the question under these two opposite aspects, of a satisfaction to Satan and a sacrifice to God; not taking each writer separately, but using the testimony of all so far as it bears on our subject. John Scotus Erigena, who stands alone in the ninth century, isolated alike in character and in date from the Fathers who preceded and the Scholastic writers who followed him, I reserve for separate notice at the end of the chapter.

Foremost among the Greek Fathers of the period before us stands Gregory Nyssen, foremost among the

Latin stands a name, which is to Christian theology what Plato and Aristotle are to the philosophy of the ancient world, a name never to be mentioned without admiration and reverence—though even to the greatest of human teachers we may ascribe no infallibility—Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. It is these two writers, and especially St. Augustine, whom we shall find, here as elsewhere, the most prominent though by no means the solitary exponents of the theology of their age. If I make special mention after them of Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Gregory the Great, and St. Leo, in connection with our present subject, it is by no means to the exclusion of other and still memorable names. Let us proceed, then, first to investigate their view of the atonement as a ransom paid to Satan, including the three ideas of his claim to a payment, the delusion under which he accepted or rather extorted it, and its necessity.

1. It was Origen's argument, that Satan had acquired an actual right over men through the Fall, for which the Soul or Blood of Jesus was the only adequate ransom. That right is admitted more or less distinctly by all subsequent Fathers, and while some, as St. Leo, call it 'tyrannical,' they do not deny it to be just.* Peter Lombard, indeed, the latest advocate of the theory, distinguishes between the justice of our bondage and the injustice of our task-master; but he lived after St. Anselm had pointed out the distinction, and made it a ground for rejecting the whole scheme.† So late as the eighth century, the last Greek theologian,

* Leo *Serm.* xxii. 3. Jus tyrannicum vindicabat, nec injusto dominatu premebat.

† Pet. Lomb. *Sent. Lib.* iii. *Dist.* 19.

John of Damascus, though, as we shall see by and by, not ignorant of its difficulties or willing to accept it in its entirety, asserts expressly that the tyrant would have had ground for complaint, if after having himself conquered man he had been violently robbed of his prize by God.* The same view is expounded at length by St. Augustine, St. Gregory Nyssen, St. Gregory the Great, Theodoret, and others, on the ground that, as we had voluntarily placed ourselves under Satan's dominion, we could not justly be delivered from it without an equivalent being paid.† And that equivalent, they declare with one voice, was the Blood of Christ. "The price is the Blood of Christ," says St. Augustine, who may speak for all the rest.‡ It is in this sense, and not with any notion of our sins being imputed to Him, that they understand His death as vicarious, and His being made a curse for us. We were given in pledge, St. Ambrose says, to an evil creditor, and Christ 'is not unjustly *said* to be made sin, since He was offered for sin;' and so St. Augustine, "By receiving the punishment, and not the sin, He destroyed both sin and punishment;" St. Athanasius, "Seeing the impossibility of our paying an equivalent penalty, He took it on Himself;" and Eusebius, "He took the curse upon Him, being made a curse for us; for what else is this than a ransom for our souls (ἀντίψυχον)?" "This solution of the evil was left," says Proclus, "for neither man nor angel would suffice;" and Gregory the Great, "The Father being just dis-

* *De Fid. Orth.* iii. 18.

† Aug. *De Lib. Arb.* iii. 10. Greg. Nyss. *Or. Cat.* xxiii. Greg. Mag. *Mor.* xvii. 28. Theod. *De Prov. Or.* x.

‡ *Enarr. in Ps.* 95.

poses all things justly, punishing the Just One;"* but this language of God punishing the Son is rarely met with, however it be explained. They add that the payment greatly exceeded the debt; it was not only a full equivalent for all other things together, it was, as Gregory Nyssen says, a higher and greater discharge.† God did more than justice to the Evil One. "The adversary," says St. Ambrose, "rated us at a low price, as slaves, but the Lord ransomed us for a great price, as being made after His image and likeness."‡ But why, it may be asked, was this particular kind of ransom required? The answer, already suggested by Origen, seems to be this. Man had voluntarily succumbed in his conflict with Satan; and the tyrant could claim dominion over him till he had slain one perfectly righteous, free from actual, and, as St. Augustine is careful to add, original sin, and who had foiled him by the use of that same free-will which man had perverted to his ruin. Many righteous men he had in past times striven against and slain, but none, even the holiest of them, were perfect. One alone could successfully contend with him; and here we see Irenæus' view of the Temptation illustrated.§ One alone could suffer a wholly unmerited punishment, who as God was sinless, and as man could die. In the words of St. Leo, the great doctor of the Incarnation: "Though in the sight of the Lord, the death of many saints was

* Amb. *De Virg.* iii. *ad fin.* *In Ep. ad Cor.* ii. 5. Aug. *Serm.* xxxvii. *in Luc.* Ath. *In Pass. et Cruce Dei.* Euseb. *De Dem. Ep.* x. 1. Procl. *Const. Hom. De Christ. Nat.* Greg. *Moral.* iii. 13.

† Basil. *Hom. in Ps.* xlviii. The references to Greg. Nyss., where it is not otherwise stated, are to his *Catechetics*, ch. 25-28.

‡ Ambr. *In Luc.* vii. 2.

§ Greg. Mag. *In Luc.* i., *Hom.* xvi. 2. Cf. supr. p. 31.

precious, yet the killing of no innocent man was the propitiation of the world; the just received crowns, but did not bestow them; from the fortitude of the faithful came examples of patience, not gifts of righteousness."*

2. But how came the price to be accepted, if Satan had the option of refusing it; or, rather, why did he violently extort what deprived him for the future of his empire over the souls of men? To this question Origen had not scrupled to answer, that Satan was deceived, and deceived by God; and here he is followed by all succeeding writers. But *how* this was done Origen did not explain. They do; and their explanation is a startling one. He was deceived, they say, by means of the Incarnation, and they sometimes even speak as if the main object of the Incarnation was to deceive him. No one is more explicit on this point than Gregory Nyssen, who dwells on the 'skill and cunning' of the arrangement.† The human nature of Christ was the veil to shroud His divinity; according to Gregory the Great, it was the bait whereon the Evil One was to be caught and pierced, as a fish on the hook; it was a net to catch the bird in, according to Isidore of Seville; the Cross, adds Peter Lombard, was a mousetrap, baited with His blood.‡ One passage shall be quoted from Gregory Nyssen, where this view is stated in full: "It was impossible for him (Satan) to look on the bare form of God without seeing in Him something of flesh, which he had already subdued through sin. *For this cause the Godhead was*

* Leo. *De Pass. Serm.* xii.

† *σοφὸν καὶ τεχνικὸν τῆς οἰκονομίας.*

‡ Greg. *Mor.* xxxii. 7. Isid. Sev. *Sent.* i. 14. Pet. Lomb. *Sent.* iii. 19.

veiled in flesh, that looking on Him according to what was of kindred nature (on His humanity) he might not dread the approach of superior power, and after perceiving His power quietly shine out more and more through His miracles, might think He was rather to be coveted [as a victim] than to be dreaded." St. Leo speaks in much the same sense.* Not that Satan was supposed to be ignorant that Christ was the Son of God, or that He was incarnated for our redemption, but ignorant of the means destined to accomplish it, and therefore supposing that, if he could kill the Redeemer, he could also retain Him in his power, and frustrate His design.† It is obvious that this view is very difficult to reconcile with that of a bargain struck and price paid, which yet is equally maintained by Gregory Nyssen under the term used before by Origen (ἀντάλλαγμα). Others, as Gregory the Great and Leo, dwell less on this aspect of the matter and insist more exclusively on the deception. It was necessary, for this end, that Christ should be born (His miraculous birth Satan knew not) and pass through the ordinary stages of childhood, youth, and manhood, as the introduction to His Crucifixion, by which Satan finally overreached and defeated himself. On the difficulties of this theory something shall be said presently. Meanwhile let us pass to the third point included in it.

3. All, from Irenæus downwards, who have advocated the notion of a payment made to Satan, state or imply that it was necessary as a matter of justice. But was the necessity an absolute one? The Fathers

* Leo *Serm.* xxii. 4. † Greg. *Moral.* xxxiii. 7.

are unanimous in replying that it was not; and when they speak of it as necessary, they must be understood as meaning that it was necessary, if an adequate price were to be paid at all. Gregory Nyssen asks why God does not of His own mere will do what He purposes, and answers that we cannot tell. Gregory Nazianzen says, that, as He made all things by His word, He might have saved us by His will; Athanasius, that He might by a mere word have loosed the curse; Theodoret, that He might have dissolved the power of death by His will only. Gregory the Great, St. Leo, and St. Cyril of Alexandria say the same.* St. Augustine is even more outspoken: "They are fools who say, the wisdom of God could not otherwise deliver man than by taking human nature and being born of a woman, and suffering all things at sinners' hands; but if He did otherwise, your folly would be equally dissatisfied." He says elsewhere that the method chosen was good and congruous to the Divine dignity, and no other could be more convenient, but that others might have been found.† It was this congruity, as matter of justice towards Satan, that led God, according to the Fathers, to choose the method He did choose; some add, as Athanasius and Augustine, that it was also chosen as the most beneficial to man. This then is what they mean by speaking, in this connection, of a necessity for the Incarnation and the Cross.

As I began the account of this theory with a quotation from its first author in the Church, Irenæus, it

* Greg. Nyss. *Or. Cat.* 17. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 9. Ath. *Contr. Arian. Or.* ii. 68. Theod. *Contr. Græcos Disp.* 6. Leo *Serm.* i. *De Nativ.* Greg. *Moral.* xx. 26. Cyril Alex. *De Incarn.* See for other authorities Petav. *De Incarn.* ii. 13.

† Aug. *De Agone Christi*, 10. Ib. *De Trin.* xiii. 10.

may be closed with the following passage from its latest advocate, Peter Lombard: "He was made, therefore, mortal man, that by death He might conquer the Devil. For unless He were man who overcame the Devil, man would seem to be violently, not justly delivered from him to whom he had voluntarily subjected himself. But if man overcame him, he clearly lost all right over man, and, for man to conquer, God must be in him to make him free from sin. For if he were mere man, or an incarnate angel, he might easily sin, as we know both natures have fallen by themselves. Therefore the Son of God assumed a passible humanity, in which He tasted death for us, and by which He opened heaven to us, and redeemed us from the service of the Devil, that is from sin (for the Devil's service is sin) and from punishment."*

It is obvious to remark, that this method of regarding the Passion and death of Christ brings out certain aspects of truth with conspicuous clearness. It exhibits that mighty contest between good and evil which has been waged incessantly, since the mystery of iniquity began to work, in the world, in the Church, and in each separate soul, but which reached its culminating point when the Tempter strove with the human Soul of Jesus, through every avenue of sense or spirit, through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and prevailed not. All possible malice of all possible temptations was gathered up and concentrated in that last bold act of rebellion, and all was staked upon the issue. If the Evil One conquered then, he conquered all; if he failed, all was

* Pet. Lomb. *Sent.* iii. 19.

lost. The pledge of our victory was assured when the Soul of the Redeemer passed beneath his fiery touch, shrinking, indeed, in all but intolerable anguish no tongue may utter, no heart of man conceive, from that close approach of defilement, yet passed unscathed, as the three Holy Children through the fiery furnace of Babylon. Till then he had seemed to triumph; the righteous suffered, and their blood was spilt upon the earth. They were scourged, or stoned, or sawn asunder, or burnt, or crucified, and the world was glad at their departure. In the fulness of time God sent His Son, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, and because of His perfect holiness men rose up against Him and slew Him; but His death was the life of the world. The woman's Seed had crushed the serpent's head. The representative wickedness of mankind, all the darkest sins that stain our corrupt humanity, were collected, during that Paschal week, within the circle of the apostate city. Pride, impurity, hypocrisy, cowardice, cruelty, falsehood, the bitterness of malice, the meanness of jealousy, the devilish hatred of superior goodness—all were there. There was the incestuous Herod, the coward judge who bartered right for interest, the traitor apostle, the hypocritical priesthood, the frenzied, fanatical multitude. There was the horrible determination to put down an opponent by foul means, if not by fair; if evidence were wanting, false witnesses could be purchased; if violence were dangerous, the end could be attained by fraud. The odium of judicial murder could be thrown on the Gentile, but the voice was the voice of the Jewish Sanhedrim, though a Roman governor pronounced the sentence, and Roman soldiers

fulfilled it.* If, then, that crowning iniquity could be pardoned—and it is a pious tradition in the Church that all who had a hand in crucifying Jesus are now before His throne in heaven—none need despair of forgiveness. In the redemption of His murderers we read the promise of our own.

With sacrifice the tale of our misery had begun, and with sacrifice it was to end. In the dim twilight of human history, when sin was first breaking in on that fair creation, which the All-Merciful had blest because it was very good, there is revealed the form of a mother, struck with anguish, weeping over the fierce iniquity of her first-born and the beautiful corpse of her Martyr-boy, martyred, it would seem, in that very act of sacrifice which is the creature's rightful homage to his Maker and his God. Thousands of years rolled by, and another Mother, pierced with the sword of sorrows, stood beneath the noonday starlight on the mount of death, where the blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel flowed, and the cry rose up from the darkened cross, whose echo dies not day nor night before the throne in heaven, and the altars of the earthly Church: 'Father forgive, they know not what they do.' Henceforth the law of suffering, to which the Incarnate Son had voluntarily submitted, was turned from a curse into a beatitude; self-sacrifice became the royal road of redemption, the baptism of blood was for remission of sin. The kingdom of Satan, like the kingdom of God, is within us, and he is then most near the sons of God when they come to present themselves before the Lord. Therefore He came, in whom alone the

* διὰ χειρῶν ἀνόμων προσπήξαντες ἀνείλετε. Acts ii. 23.

prince of this world could have no part nor lot, to break the chains of that bondage of corruption, and bid the slave go free.

In this sense, the speculations of the Fathers on the relation of the Incarnation to the Evil One have left an abiding heritage to the Church. But, on the other hand, the theory of a ransom, if literally understood, is beset with difficulties, both intellectual and moral, of the gravest kind. First, it is not coherent; for how can the notion of Satan being deceived, which forms an integral portion of it, be reconciled with the notion of a bargain struck and a price paid to satisfy a claim of justice? If he was tricked into forfeiting his just rights by grasping at rights where he had none, how is compensation made to him? Then, again, how can the blood, or soul, or death of the Redeemer be an equivalent to him at all for the empire which he lost, when it gave him no real power over Him who died only to rise again from the dead, whose soul was not left in Hades, and whose flesh knew no corruption? And if the theory labours under these logical difficulties, the moral and religious objections are still more serious. What is meant by God deceiving the Devil, and by the parallel so elaborately drawn by many writers between the deceit which ruined man and the deceit which redeemed him? When, for instance, Gregory Nyssen says, that the one wrought his deceit for the corruption of our nature, but the Just and Good and Wise used the counsel of deceit for the salvation of that which was corrupted,*

* He proceeds, *οὐ μόνον τὸν ἀπολωλότα διὰ τούτων εὐεργετῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν ἀπωλείαν καθ' ἡμῶν ἐνεργήσαντα*, which seems to imply his agreement in Origen's belief of the restoration of the fallen angels.

is not this like saying, that the end justified the means, that deception was the chosen instrument of the God of truth? To this a modern writer, viewing the whole question from the independent standpoint of impartial unbelief, adds a further observation, that the Incarnation being thus introduced for an illusory purpose is in danger of being itself regarded as a phenomenal illusion, and the Docetic heresy brought back by a sidewind into the Church.* That, however, seems an over-refinement of criticism. Those who insist most strongly on this object of the human nature of the Redeemer, insist also on the necessity of His actual death, which required a real, not merely a phenomenal, body; not to repeat here an observation made before, in a different connection, that the Fathers recognize many other objects of the Incarnation which certainly involve its reality. It is more to the purpose to remark, what indeed did not escape the notice of many advocates of the theory, that there is something shocking to natural reverence in the blood of the Holy One becoming the prize of Satan. More than that, the whole theory carried with it the original sin of its Gnostic parentage. The essentially dualistic notion of two independent powers, set over against one another, of a kingdom of light and a kingdom of darkness, with jurisdictions mutually limited by conflicting claims, lies inevitably at the root of any system which treats evil as other than a temporary and accidental interruption of the divine order, or ascribes to the Evil Spirit rights of whatever kind, and though acquired by the voluntary and disgraceful submission

* Baur *Von der Versöhnung*, pp. 82, 83.

of his captives, as against the supremacy of Him who is infinite in holiness as in power and love. An unjust victory could confer no claims, nor wrong because it was successful become the ground of an immoral right.

This radical flaw of the whole system had not been unfelt from the first, while its inadequacy as an explanation of the great mystery of redemption had prevented it from ever being held alone. We have seen that Origen combined with it the idea of a sacrifice offered to God, though without attempting to harmonize the two, which indeed was scarcely possible. Nor was this idea ever lost sight of by succeeding writers. It is suggested, in antagonism to the dominant theory, as early as the fourth century, by Gregory Nazianzen. To the question, *To whom* was Christ's blood paid as a ransom? he replies; "If to the Evil One, shame upon the insult, that the robber should not only receive a ransom from God, but receive God Himself, a payment so much exceeding in value his own tyranny, on account of which it was just that we also should be spared. But if it was paid to the Father, first how? For it was not by Him we were held captive. And next, *for what reason should the blood of His only-begotten Son please the Father*, who would not receive Isaac when being offered up by his father, but changed the victim and gave a ram instead of the human sacrifice? Or is it clear that the Father receives it, *without having asked or needed it*, but on account of the dispensation (*οἰκονομίαν*) and its being fit that men should be sanctified by that which is mortal in God, that He might deliver us Himself, having conquered the tyrant by violence, and bring us back to Himself through the mediation of His Son, who disposed this too to the

honour of the Father, to whom He seems to concede all things?"* This was to assert, that a sacrifice was presented to the Father, but to reject particular theories about it as doubtful or superfluous. And, accordingly, the writer says elsewhere, that it is a point on which we are free to speculate, for though not without advantage to hit the mark, it is not dangerous to miss it.† Four centuries later, John of Damascus, who repeats almost the very words of Gregory as to the price being paid to the tyrant, though in an earlier chapter of the same book he had acknowledged a certain claim of justice on Satan's side, decides, against Gregory, that the 'ransom' was paid to the Father because we had sinned against Him.‡ It is remarkable that Gregory, while discarding the idea of a payment to Satan, yet retains one of the strangest features of that theory, saying, that he who had deceived us with the hope of Godhead was himself deceived by the veil of flesh.

This idea of a sacrifice offered to the Father (or rather to the whole Trinity)§ is stated or implied by the great body of patristic writers, though not made the basis of any particular scheme of satisfaction, and usually held in connection with that of a ransom paid to Satan. St. Athanasius speaks of Christ offering a sacrifice for all; St. Augustine traces out the essential obligation of sacrifice, even antecedently to the conviction of sin, as the outward expression of the supreme homage (λατρεία) due to God; Eusebius refers to the sacrifice of Abel, which he says was accepted in

* Greg. Naz. *Or.* 42. † Ib. *Or.* 33.

‡ *De Fid. Orth.* iii. 27. Cf. supr. p. 42.

§ Fulgent. *Contr. Arian.* ii. 4. Cf. Ans. *Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 18.

preference to Cain's because it was an animal sacrifice; St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "This was the goat sent alive into the wilderness, the goat that was offered to the Lord as a victim for the propitiation of sins, and made a true propitiation for the peoples who believe on Him;" St. Leo speaks of an offering to God, though he dwells chiefly on the necessity of a ransom from the power of the Evil One; St. Gregory the Great says, that the Son of God offered a sacrifice for us, and insists that a victim for man must himself be man, but to cleanse them from sin must be sinless.* The only attempt, if such it can be called, to mediate between these theories is in the view dwelt upon in Athanasius' treatise on the Incarnation, of a sinless victim being needed to undergo the sentence of death, incurred by man, as an obligation or kind of debt, at the Fall, and from which God could not otherwise release Him without being untrue to His own word. The writer sometimes speaks of an equivalent (*κατάλληλον*), sometimes of a debt owed (*ὀφειλόμενον τῷ θανάτῳ*) or a full satisfaction to death; and he thus illustrates the two natures of our Lord, who must be man to die, and more than man not to be under the obligation of dying. The Word is said to take to Himself a body, which partaking of the common nature of all may be fit to die in the place of all, but through the indwelling Word may remain incorruptible.† The same view is expressed by St. Ambrose, when he says our Lord underwent death, that

* Eus. *De Dem. Ev.* i. 10. Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, x. 19. *Contr. Faust.* xx. et passim. Cyril *In Lev.* x. Greg. Mag. *Mor.* xvii. 46.

† Ath. *De Inc.* 9. *τὸ δυνάμενον ἀποθανεῖν ἑαυτῷ λαμβάνει οὖμα, ἵνα τοῦτο τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων λόγου μεταλαβὸν ἀντὶ πάντων ἱκανὸν γένηται τῷ θανάτῳ, καὶ δία τὸν ἐνοικήσαντα λόγον ἄφθαρτον διαμείνῃ.*

the sentence might be fulfilled and the decree satisfied.*

At the root of all these theories, whether of a ransom paid to Satan, or a sacrifice to God, or a fulfilment of the sentence pronounced on Adam's sin, lay two ideas, which became afterwards the two factors of the scholastic theory of satisfaction, and which were brought into prominence by the controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries, in the East on the Godhead and Incarnation of the Eternal Son, in the West on the extent of man's natural faculties and the doctrines of grace. These are, on the one hand, the infinite value of the human acts and sufferings of the Redeemer, through the hypostatic union; on the other, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the need of Divine grace to supplement the weakness of a corrupted will. The latter point assumed a new importance and distinctness in Augustine's controversy with the Pelagians. Athanasius, in his first and second Orations against the Arians, is led constantly to argue, that only One who is Himself God could mediate between God and man, could restore to us the holiness we had lost, make us partakers of the Divine nature, sons of God, and heirs of eternal life. A mere man, he urges, might have preached forgiveness, he could not have really removed the barrier between man and God. St. Cyril, in his tenth anathema, is still more explicit; he says again; "One would not have been equivalent to all, had He been mere man; but if He is understood to be God incarnate and suffering in His own flesh, *the*

* Ambr. *De Fug. Sæc.* ut implereter sententia et satisfieret judicato. Here we have the word 'satisfy,' but in reference to the sentence pronounced on Adam, not to the justice of God.

whole creation is little as compared to Him;" as little, says St. Chrysostom, as a tiny drop to the boundless ocean. His namesake of Jerusalem says similarly, that the iniquity of sinners was not so great as the righteousness of Him who died for them, who was not mere man or angel, but Incarnate God.* Thus the whole doctrine of Redemption was seen to hinge on a right belief about the Person and nature of the Redeemer, and therefore also about the Holy Trinity. Only One, who was God and man, could bring man again into communion with God. But it is rather His assumption of our nature in all its fulness than His death alone, that the Fathers dwelt upon. He is the representative Man, the Second Adam, the Head of the Body, who recapitulates in Himself, as they are fond of expressing it, the whole human race, and imparts to them, through the union of their nature with His, a new principle of life, in whose death all die, in whose resurrection all are made alive. This is Athanasius' great argument against the Arians; so, too, St. Augustine says, "That nature was to be assumed which had to be delivered." Hilary of Poitiers had said before him; "He took on Himself the nature of all flesh, by which, being made the True Vine, He contains in Himself the race of all the progeny of flesh," that is, He is to the new creation what Adam was to the old. And St. Leo says, after him, that the Son of God is one and the same Christ in all His saints, that on the cross is celebrated the oblation of human nature.†

* Ath. *Contr. Arian.* i. 19, 37, 49; ii. 14, 20, 68, 69, 70, 77. Cyril Alex. *De Recta Fide.* Ib. *Contr. Nestor.* iii. 2. Chrys. *Hom.* x. *in Ep. ad Rom.* Cyril Hier. *Cat.* xiii. 33.

† Aug. *De Vera Rel.* 30. Hil. *De Trin.* ii. 24. Leo *Serm.* lxvi. 4. *De*

Enough has been said to show, from what point of view the Fathers were wont to regard the Redeemer's office and work, and that their whole teaching hinged on a right understanding of His consubstantiality with the Father by virtue of His Eternal Generation, and with us by His Conception in Mary's womb. In bringing out the need of a reconciliation between God and man, divided by sin, and the infinite dignity of the Person of Christ, they laid a basis for future speculation on the atonement; but their own theories, whether of a ransom paid to Satan, or a sacrifice offered to God upon the Cross, were kept subordinate to their reiterated and many-sided exhibition of the assumption of our nature by the Incarnate Word, the Corner Stone who makes both one, the Man whom holy Job sought and found not, who could arbitrate between him and his Maker, because He laid His hand on both.* The Incarnation itself they regard as 'a kind of perpetual sacrifice,' in which the whole human family is offered up to God, and this begins from the first moment of the Conception. "By the mystery of His humanity," says Gregory the Great, "He offers an everlasting sacrifice."† He is Priest and Temple, Altar and Victim, all in One.

But they never imagined, let it be distinctly repeated, that the Incarnation or the Cross effected a

Pass. iv. It is a strange perversion of this idea when Strauss says, "True philosophy *substitutes* for Jesus the abstract term Humanity. Humanity dies, rises again, and ascends up on high. The individual Jesus is of little moment, saving in so far as He may have served to bring out the idea." We may reply, in the words of Rousseau, *L'inventeur en serait plus etonnant que le hèros.* (*Emile*, 54. 4.)

* Job ix. 33.

† Greg. *Mor.* i. 19. See Thomass. *De Inc.* x. 8, 9, and the passages there quoted.

change in the mind of God toward us. The sacrifice of Calvary, however explained, they looked upon as part of an eternal purpose, not a device to avert His anger, but the utterance of His unfailing love. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world, though offered once for all in blood on the Cross, offered continually till time shall be no more, in the heavenly Jerusalem, and on the altars of the earthly Church. I quoted a writer of the first century, who lays down this principle. Let me add here the testimony of the greatest doctor of his own or any age of Christian history. The passage is too remarkable to be curtailed; "What means this, 'reconciled by the death of His Son?' Is it, that when the Father was angry with us He looked on the death of His Son for us and was appeased? Had the Son, then, been so completely appeased already, that He even vouchsafed to die for us, but was the Father still so incensed that He would not be appeased unless the Son died for us? And what is it, which the same teacher of the Gentiles says elsewhere; 'What then shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who is against us? He, who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him given us all things?' Would the Father, unless He had been already appeased, deliver up His Son for us, not sparing Him? Do not these statements seem to contradict each other? In the former the Son dies for us, and the Father is reconciled to us by His death; but in the latter the Father, as though He first loved us, Himself does not spare His Son for our sakes, Himself delivers Him up to death for us. But I see that the Father loved us before also, not only before the Son died for us, but

before He created the world, as the Apostle himself testifies, saying, 'As He has chosen us in Him before the creation of the world.' Nor was the Son delivered up, for us as it were, unwillingly when the Father spared Him not, since it is said of Him also, 'who loved me, and gave Himself for me.' The Father therefore, and the Son, and the Spirit of Both, work all things at the same time, equally and harmoniously; yet we are justified in the blood of Christ, and reconciled to God through the death of His Son." This shows how little a change in the Divine mind, or a division of will in the Persons of the Trinity was thought of. "One," says St. Leo, "is the kindness of their mercy as the sentence of their justice, nor is there any division in action where there is no diversity in will." And Cyril of Alexandria almost repeats the very words, already quoted, from the Epistle to Diognatus: "God was and is good by nature, ever full of mercy and pity, and did not become this in time, but was shown to be such towards us."* It was we who changed; His mercies had not failed. With Him, who knows no shadow of vicissitude, the grace of redemption was involved in the prevision of sin.

And now we are in a position to answer the question which may perhaps have occurred to the reader, as to why we find so little of definite theory on the Atonement among the Fathers, while one view very prevalent then has since completely passed away, and a great writer even says it is a matter on which we need not have any theory at all. Was their faith in Christ uncertain, or were they ashamed of the foolish-

* Aug. *De Trin.* xiii. 11. Leo *Serm.* iii. *De Pent.* Cyr. Alex. *adv. Nestor.* iii. 2.

ness of the Cross? The answer is not far to seek. To them, as to the Church in all ages, it was not the Atonement but the Incarnation which was the centre of Christian faith as of Christian life; the *Incarnatus* was the key-note of their creed. The difference between their way of looking at the matter and that which came in with the Reformation may be shortly described as follows. By the Reformers, the incarnation and earthly life of Christ is regarded only, or chiefly, as the necessary introduction to His atoning death; while the Fathers see in His death, not an isolated act, or even an isolated sacrifice, but the natural consummation of that one great act of self-devotion, whose unbroken energy stretched from the Conception to the Cross. The blood that flowed on Calvary was indeed the price of redemption, but it could not be thought of apart from the Redeemer's life; it was not so much the blood as the will of Him who shed it, that was the real oblation;* His work of mediation was summed up but not exhausted in the act of dying; He was anointed for His priesthood in Mary's womb; He is still a Priest in Heaven. In all the stages of that life, as in the closing sacrifice, the believer was to be associated, I might almost say identified, with his Lord; 'on the Cross was celebrated the oblation of our common humanity,' as the faithful unite the oblation of themselves with the abiding sacrifice of the altar. Their whole life was to be, like His, an act of life-long crucifixion, but also a risen life, for all rise with Him. Over all that touched His Person the Church kept jealous watch, for in Him she lived

* Thus St. Bernard said afterwards, in reply to Abelaird, "Non mors sed voluntas sponte morientis placuit."

and moved and had her being, and on Him through successive ages was fixed her deepening gaze. He had assumed man's nature, with all its sinless infirmities, and by the very act of assuming had restored it, and bridged over the chasm which divided the creature from his Creator. In that nature He died for us. Fathers and doctors might well be suffered to use their own judgment in explaining the efficacy of His death, or to abstain from explanations, so long as the truth of His Person and natures, on which all its efficacy rested, was held fast. And in this the Church did but carry out the intimations of Scripture, which does not dwell exclusively on the death of Christ, but exhibits in the four Gospels the facts and words of His earthly ministry. When, for instance, we read; "For this end hath the Son of God appeared, that He may destroy the works of the Devil," it is rather His life than His death that is referred to. By His victory over the Tempter, by His miracles of mercy, by His perfect obedience, by His pure teaching, by the vocation of His Apostles, by the institution of His Church, no less than by the crowning act of self-devotion on Calvary, He broke the power of the Evil One. When, again, He says of Himself, "I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly," He speaks not so much of the forgiveness of sin as of the engrafting in our nature of a new principle of life through union with His own, who took root, according to the Prophet's saying, as a tender plant in the dry and thirsty soil of our corrupted humanity. It was when all this was coming to be forgotten, when the Incarnation itself was thrust into the background, the sacraments which are its application slighted, and the

Sacrifice of the Altar which perpetuates it reduced to a symbolic form, that theories about the Atonement were made into articles of a standing or falling Church, and became, for those who had lost the true key for interpreting it, a source of manifold misconceptions. When the life of Jesus was treated as a biographical record, men began to wrangle about the meaning of His death.

I make no apology for closing this summary of patristic teaching with words which express its spirit far better than any I could hope to use myself; "The Son of God then took our nature upon Him, that in Him it might do and suffer what in itself was impossible to it. What it could not effect of itself, it could effect in Him. He carried it about Him through a life of penance. He carried it forward to agony and death. In Him our sinful nature died and rose again. When it died in Him on the Cross, that death was its new creation. In Him it satisfied its old and heavy debt; for the presence of His divinity gave it transcendent merit. His presence had kept it pure from sin from the first. His Hand had carefully selected the choicest specimen of our nature from the Virgin's substance; and, separating from it all defilement, His personal indwelling hallowed it and gave it power. And thus, when it had been offered upon the Cross, and made perfect by suffering, it became the first-fruits of a new man; it became a divine leaven of holiness for the new birth and spiritual life of as many as should receive it."*

From the death of Gregory the Great, 'the last of the Fathers,' at the beginning of the seventh century,

* Newman's *Paroch. Serm.* vol. vi. p. 86.

till Anselm came forward, at the close of the eleventh, as the pioneer of scholasticism, the theology of Western Christendom slept, it has been said, her winter sleep—a sleep disturbed rather than broken by the strange apparition in the ninth century of John Scotus Erigena, one of the most original thinkers of his own or any age, as of one born out of due time. He belongs, however, more to the preceding than the subsequent period, and must therefore be noticed here. Christian theology, as has been observed before, took its rise at Alexandria, the home of Neo-Platonism, in the third century; its later scholastic form was based on the study of the other great master of ancient philosophy, Aristotle. Erigena, who drew his inspirations chiefly from Maximus, the last but one of the Greek theologians, and the works composed during the fifth century under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, is the latest and most systematic exponent of a Platonic theosophy of the Gospel. With the part he took in the controversies of his own day on predestination and the Eucharist we need not meddle here. Nor can I profess to do more than give a brief sketch of his teaching on sin and redemption, as gathered from his five books on the *Division of Nature*.* It would be beyond my present scope to enter into any lengthened discussion of it, or to trace its connection in detail with other parts of his system, which in regarding the Divine nature as incomprehensible alike to itself and to every created intellect, as not something but nothing because exceeding everything, not itself being, but the source of being to others,† is not easy to reconcile with God's

* *De Divisione Naturarum*, lib. v. *Diu Desiderati.* Oxon. 1681.

† Ib. ii. p. 78.

revelation of Himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. His explanation of the fall and restoration of man, translated into the simplest language it will bear, may be stated thus. The Creator is properly one with His creation, for He contains in Himself the primordial ideas or archetypes on which it is formed; man, His chief work, is the middle point of creation, combining in himself the opposite poles of creaturely existence, the sensible and the intellectual.* He fell, not in time and in the earthly paradise, but in himself, and before the temptation of the Devil, for it is incredible that had he ever stood in contemplation of eternal peace, he should have fallen at all.† By this fall he not only lost his original union with God, but suffered an internal division in himself into male and female, which was healed by the resurrection of Christ, who rose, not in bodily sex but simply as man, for in Him is neither male nor female.‡ Man retained, however, in his fall the mind, in which chiefly consists the image of the Creator, and by which we understand Him, and did not wholly desert the Author of his existence, for in Him we live and move and have our being.§ But there was need of reconciliation. Therefore the Word of God took upon Him human nature, and in doing so took upon Him the nature of every created substance, visible or invisible, that He might save and restore all

* Ib. ii. p. 48.

† Ib. iv. p. 196. Datur intelligi quod homo prius in se ipso lapsus est quam a diabolo tentareter, non enim credibile est eundem hominem et in contemplatione æternæ pacis stetisse, et suadente femina, serpentis veneno corrupta corruisse.

‡ Ib. ii. p. 49, cf. p. 52. Adunatis totius creaturæ quæ in primo homine fieret si non peccaret, in Christo resurgente ante omnes per omnia facta. Non enim in sexu corporeo sed in homine tantum surrexit ex mortuis, in ipso enim nec masculus nec femina erat.

§ Ib. ii. p. 48, v. p. 230.

by saving and reuniting after an ineffable manner the outward products to their original causes or archetypes, which existed eternally and immutably in His own divine nature; and thus, by His incarnation, He gives to men redemption, and to angels knowledge of Himself, for before the incarnation or theophany He was incomprehensible to all created natures alike. The restoration of man is fulfilled in His death, for the dissolution of the body is the end of our destruction, and is rather a benefit than a penalty, though it be the penalty of sin, and is not to be regarded as the perishing of our substance, but as a wonderful and ineffable return into the former state which man had lost by sin, that state of pure contemplation in which nothing remains but what is spiritual and intellectual, for the substance of the body is itself intellectual.*

The Platonic element in this scheme is obvious enough. We have the ἰδέαι and the φαινόμενα. The Word of God is incarnated in visible form to reunite the ideal with the actual, the One with the many, the figures traced on the wall of the earthly cave with the eternal archetypes whose reflection they are, but from which they have been unnaturally divorced by sin. The Incarnation and Resurrection are dwelt upon almost to the exclusion of the Passion, and the death of the corruptible body is felt to be not so much a punishment as a release, the rending asunder of the material veil interposed between the spirit of man and the spirit of God. Erigena's theory exhibits forcibly the abnormal division between man and his Maker, wrought by sin, and the need of One who shares the

* Ib. v. p. 252, 232.

natures of both to become the Repairer of the breach. But it is not equally easy to connect all its details with the doctrines of the Gospel. He has rather galvanized than revived the Alexandrian theology in this last attempt to harmonize faith with reason through the forms of Neo-Platonism, and in his own day he found few to understand or appreciate him. For two centuries yet the trance of theological science remains unbroken; but sleepers dream before their awakening.

NOTE TO CHAP. III.

ON STRAUSS' ESTIMATE OF THE BELIEF OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

In a section on the 'Christology of the Orthodox System,' at the conclusion of his original work on the *Life of Jesus (Das Leben Jesu.* Tübingen, 1837), Strauss, after insisting that the outlines of that system are to be found in the New Testament, and have their roots in the conviction of Christ's resurrection, had taken occasion to describe, with that eloquence which is always at his command when he chooses to employ it, the belief of the early Church in her Lord. He stood, like Balaam, to gaze on the armies of Israel, and his tongue was constrained to bless the faith which he has made it the labour of a lifetime to uproot. My object in referring to the statement here is to observe, that it substantially endorses the view of patristic theology taken in this volume. And since there is a lesson to be learnt from the utterances of 'Saul among the prophets,' and the book is not familiar to the majority of English readers, it may be worth while to translate the passage here, premising that some of its native force must inevitably evaporate in the process.

"How full of blessing and elevation, of encouragement and comfort, were the thoughts the early Church derived from this conception of her Christ! Through the sending of the Son of God into the world, and His delivery to death for it, heaven and earth are reconciled (2 Cor. v. 18, *sqq.*, Ephes. i. 10, Col. i. 20); through His supreme oblation the love of God is guaranteed to men (Rom. v. 8, viii. 31, *sqq.*, 1 John iv. 9), and the most joyful hope opened to them. Since the Son of God has become Man, men are His brethren, and, as such, children of God, and joint heirs with Christ of the

treasure of Divine beatitude. (Rom. viii. 16-29.) Their slavish estate under the law has ceased, and love has come into the place of the fear of punishment threatened by the law. (Rom. viii. 15, Gal. iv. 1, *sqq.*) Believers are redeemed from the curse of the law, inasmuch as Christ has given Himself up for them, by enduring that death on which the curse of the law was laid. (Gal. iii. 13.) Now we have no longer the impossible task of fulfilling all the requirements of the law (Gal. iii. 10, *sqq.*)—a task none have accomplished (Rom. i. 18, iii. 20), and, owing to the sinfulness of nature, none can (Rom. v. 12, *sqq.*); which only entangles more deeply those who attempt it in the misery of an internal conflict with themselves. (Rom. vii. 7, *sqq.*) He who believes in Christ, and trusts to the atoning power of His death, is pardoned by God; he who surrenders himself to God's free grace is justified before Him by grace, not through any works or performances of his own, whence all self-righteousness is excluded. (Rom. iii. 31, *sqq.*) And, since the Mosaic law can no longer bind the believer who has died to it with Christ (Rom. vii. 1), since His eternal and all-sufficient Sacrifice has superseded the Jewish sacrifices and priesthood, the wall of partition which divided Jew from Gentile is broken down. The Gentiles, estranged from the old theocracy, left 'without God and without hope in the world,' are called to share in the new covenant of God, and a free approach provided for them to their heavenly Father. Thus the two great divisions of mankind, once at enmity with each other, are now at peace, members of the body of Christ, which is the spiritual edifice of His Church. (Eph. iii. 11, *sqq.*) But that justifying faith in the death of Christ is in very deed a dying with Him—a death, that is, unto sin; and as He rose from death to a new and immortal life, so shall they that believe on Him rise from the death of sin to a new life of righteousness and holiness; they shall put off the old man and put on the new. (Rom. vi. 1, *sqq.*) Christ Himself stands by to aid them with His Spirit, who fills those He inspires with spiritual might, and frees them more and more continually from the bondage of sin. (Romans viii. 1.) Nay, more; those in whom that Spirit dwells will be quickened in body as well as soul; for when the course of this world is ended, God through Christ will raise their bodies as He has raised the body of Christ. (Rom. viii. 11.) Christ, whom the bonds of death and Hades could not hold (Acts ii. 24), has conquered both for us, and released believers from fear of those chiefest powers of mortality. (Rom. viii.

38, *sqq.*, 1 Cor. xv. 55, *sqq.*, Heb. ii. 14, *sqq.*) His resurrection, which gives to His death its atoning power (Rom. iv. 25), is also the pledge of our resurrection and future life in Him, when He shall return to take His own to the joys of His Messianic kingdom. (1 Cor. xv.) Meanwhile we are assured, that in Him we have an Intercessor with God, who knows our need of help and forbearance, because He knows by experience the infirmity of our nature, with which He has clothed Himself, and in which He was 'tempted in all points, yet without sin.'" (*Leben Jesu*, vol. ii. p. 695-7.)

Strauss goes on to argue, chiefly from Rom. i. 3, 4, viii. 34, 1 Tim. iii. 16, and the baptismal formula, that 'the Church of the early centuries' had abundant materials for constructing 'the so-called rule of faith' comprised eventually in the Apostles' Creed, of which the Incarnation—ὅ λόγος σάρξ ἐγένετο—was the groundwork, and that she was fully justified in excluding as they arose the successive heresies, from the Ebionite to the Monothelite, which directly or indirectly contradicted that faith.

In his new *Life of Jesus (Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet.* Leipzig, 1864), addressed this time not to a learned but a popular audience, 'as Paul turned to the Gentiles when the Jews rejected his gospel,' the concluding Dissertation from which my extract is taken does not occur. But the Preface contains a general endorsement of the contents of the former work. The author still regards the 'Christology' of the Church—that is, the whole Christian doctrine of the Incarnate Word—as the product of several 'Groups of Myths' (twelve are here given, ranging from the Conception to the Ascension), whose formation must, however, be so far distinguished from that of the Greek, or rather Aryan, mythology as explained by recent writers, such as Professor Max Müller and the Rev. G. W. Cox, that they do not originate in observations of natural phenomena, but have a nucleus of historical fact. For the personal existence of Christ, which seemed to be left uncertain by the language of the earlier work (Introd. sect. 15) is here expressly affirmed, in accordance with Baur's system; though it is rather to the first Christian teachers, especially St. Paul, than to Himself that the form of religion which bears His name is to be attributed. There are 'few great men of history of whom we know so little as of Jesus' (p. 621). "The Christian Church in its earliest form, as it appears in the New Testament, was already the result of so many other factors besides the Person of Jesus, that any inference from it

[*i. e.* from its belief] to Him is in the highest degree unsafe" (p. 623). "It may even be questioned whether, if He had re-appeared on earth about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) He would have recognized Himself in the Christ then preached in the Church" (p. 623). "Little of His real history can now be certainly ascertained; what is certain is, that those supernatural acts and events whereon the faith of the Church has principally fastened, never occurred at all."* Strauss admits, with Spinoza, that the Divine wisdom which is the eternal Son of God 'was remarkably *(in ausgezeichneter Weise)* manifested in Jesus Christ'; but His example can only be considered a partial and one-sided model,† and the great work of future theology is to discriminate 'the ideal from the historical Christ,' and thus convert 'the religion of Christ into the religion of humanity' (pp. 624-26). Strauss hails in Renan a fellow-labourer in the same cause, with whose book his own 'shakes hands across the Rhine,' though he considers the *Vie de Jésus* by no means free from grave errors, especially, as we learn elsewhere (p. 37), in ascribing an undue and suicidal authority to the narrative portion of St. John's Gospel.

The distinctions between the old Christianity, which the author desires to supplant, and the new religion to be substituted for it, are thus summarized in the Preface. "As long as Christianity is regarded as something given to mankind from without, Christ, as One come from heaven, His Church as an institution for the purification of men from sin through His Blood, the religion of the Spirit is itself unspiritually conceived of, and Christianity as Judaical. When it is understood, that in Christianity mankind has only become more deeply conscious of itself than before, that Jesus is only the man in whom this deeper consciousness first came forth, as a power deter-

* Has there not sometimes been a tendency among orthodox writers to dwell too exclusively on the miracles as proofs of *power?* They are surely represented in the Gospels primarily as exhibitions, so to say, of the character of God, as revelations of divine love. This is noticed, I believe, in the Bp. of Algiers' *Observations* on Renan's book, which I only know, however, from extracts.

† Elsewhere (pp. 37, 38), it is argued at length, that so long as Christ is viewed as a mere man He cannot be held to represent the perfect ideal of humanity. The criticism is intended for Keim, a German writer, but has its obvious application to Renan also. I may add, that the charge of 'cold-bloodedness' brought against the first *Leben Jesu* is equally applicable to the second. It has none of that glow of sympathy which gives to the *Vie de Jésus* its seductive charm. It is not bread but a stone.

mining His whole life and being, that we can only be cleansed from sin by entering into this idea, by taking it, as it were, into our own blood, then for the first time will Christianity be really understood in a Christian sense." (Pref. p. 18.) And again: "The constitution of the Church is only the form in which you preserve the contents of Christianity; and to know what form is best adapted for that purpose, you must know what it is you have in Christianity, whether it is something natural or supernatural. And you can so much the less leave this question undecided, because a supernatural religion with mysteries and means of grace brings with it as its legitimate sequel *(folgerichtig)* an order of priests standing over the community. *He who wishes to get rid of the clergy from the Church, must first get rid of the supernatural* (das Wunder) *from religion*" (ib. p. 19).* In the body of the work (pp. 575, 576), while of course denying that the Old Testament prophecies really refer to the death of Christ, as 'a death of atoning sacrifice' *(eines sühnenden Opfertodes)*—the sufferer spoken of being some pious contemporary or the 'collective servant of Jehovah'—Strauss expressly asserts, that such was nevertheless the belief, and the 'natural' belief, of the first converts from Judaism. On the whole then, I conceive, we shall not be wrong in assuming, that the view of Christianity, as a supernatural and sacramental religion, centred in the Person of a crucified and risen Lord, who 'was delivered for our sins,' as an atoning Sacrifice, and 'was raised for our justification,' to send down the Spirit who dwells in the Church and in its individual members as the Source of truth and grace, is still considered by Strauss a perfectly legitimate development, to say the least, of the Gospel preached within less than half a century of the death of Christ, and while His Apostles still ruled the Church: or, in other words, those who accept the Evangelical records of the life of Christ, and the comment on them contained in St. Paul's Epistles (or even in those four whose genuineness the Tübingen School does not dispute)† will find the Catholic creeds the most natural expression of their belief.

* The italics are the author's.

† Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians.

CHAPTER IV.

ST. ANSELM AND THE SCHOOLMEN.

THE transition from the period we have been hitherto considering to the scholastic era is a more complete change than can easily be expressed. We seem to have passed from a world of realities to a world of abstractions, where the forms of language or of logic have taken the place of substantive ideas. The Fathers stand to the Schoolmen something in the relation of Plato to the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists, or Aristotle to his Latin copyists of the days of the Empire. The very difference of name, 'Fathers' and 'Doctors,' serves to mark their difference of position. The whole patristic age was a life and death struggle with enemies of the faith, first with heathenism, then with heresy; it was no time for subtle distinctions, and ingenious outreasoning of artificial objections by equally artificial replies. The Fathers were engaged in building up and developing the fabric of Catholic dogma, chiefly on the Trinity and Incarnation, against opposite errors, and bringing home the truths of Christianity to the conscience and convictions of a corrupt but highly civilized world. Through the whole scholastic period there were no great doctrinal controversies.

The Church's foes were of her own household, not the heretic or the sophist, but the fierce half-converted barbarian, or the mail-clad baron, who professed allegiance to her laws. The eleven general Councils, from the first of Lateran to that of Florence, were occupied with disciplinary questions, as of investitures, or healing the schism of the anti-popes, or suppressing the Templars, and only indirectly, when at all, concerned with doctrine, as in the discussion of the Double Procession and Purgatory at Florence, with a view to the reconciliation of the Greeks. The Schoolmen, accordingly, were not employed, like the Fathers, in elaborating and fixing particular dogmas, but in reducing the whole existing body of doctrine to what they considered a rational and consistent intellectual system. Their ambition was to construct a philosophy of belief. With a few like Abelaird, this meant testing the doctrines themselves by a philosophical standard, and accepting nothing as matter of belief which could not be comprehended by the reason. With the majority it meant educing from the received creed of the Church, illustrated latterly by the physical and metaphysical principles of Aristotle, and with the aid of definition and syllogism, a kind of cyclopædia of revealed and ethical truth. They wrote for the learned few, who alone could understand their language and method; whereas Sermons and Homilies held a prominent place in patristic literature. St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and St. Leo were among the greatest preachers of the Church.

The scholastic age, of which St. Anselm is the pioneer, attained its zenith in the thirteenth century with the seraphic and angelic doctors, as they are called,

Bonaventure and Aquinas, and may be said to last till the Reformation, though it has no great names to show after the close of the fourteenth century. That was a period when history, criticism, and philosophy were almost unknown. Latin was the common tongue of the learned, and for the most part they understood no other, except their own. They had little knowledge of the past experience of the Church, and little anticipation of her future.* All this was a serious drawback to theological study. On the other hand, the whole speculative intellect of Europe was concentrated upon it, for as yet it had no rival in the world of thought; and this could not but lead to a great expansion and development of theological ideas within a certain range, and be productive of permanent results. But it followed also from so large an expenditure of intellectual energy on so narrow a field, and from the onesidedness of its analytical method, that many trifling or incongruous questions would be mooted, there would be much mere playing with edged tools, and many an elaborate edifice would be reared on the sand, which the advancing tide of sounder knowledge must inevitably sweep away. Still, with whatever shortcomings, it cannot be denied that scholasticism is an important chapter in the history of the human mind, and one which requires to be studied in tracing the development of doctrine. If the then condition of European society imposed restrictions on the progress of theological science, which were not the fault but the

* Peter Lombard, the Master of the Sentences, Gratian, the compiler of the Decretal, and Peter Comestor, who wrote an Ecclesiastical History from the Creation to the birth of Christ, authors of the second half of the twelfth century, were long regarded, according to Fleury, as forming a complete theological library.

misfortune of its votaries, if many who pursued it were little better than triflers or sophists, we must never forget that it also commanded the service of the acutest intellects, and the devotion of the most saintly hearts. The *Summa* of St. Thomas is no mean performance, though much of the Aristotelian philosophy on which it is based may have since become obsolete, and he has made lasting contributions to the science of Christian Ethics; whatever, again, may be thought of the supplementary details of St. Bonaventure's *Life of Christ*, none will dispute the spirit of ardent piety which breathes in every page.

For our present purpose it will be convenient to divide scholastic theology into the earlier and more unsystematic period, which is about coëxtensive with the twelfth century, and includes the names of Anselm and his immediate followers, Abelaird, St. Bernard, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Robert Pulleyn and others; and the later period, when it took a more systematic shape, and numbers among its celebrities Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Wicliffe, branching out into the two great schools since known as the Scotist and Thomist, and of which the Franciscan and Dominican Orders are the traditional representatives.

Few names are so dear to the student of ecclesiastical history, especially if he be an Englishman, as that of the great and good archbishop of Canterbury, who is the model at once of a recluse and of a ruler, a student in the cloister and a hero in the strife. He surely was no common man who fought out, almost single-handed, the great battle of investitures in England, who confronted by mere force of saintly character

the brute strength of the rough-handed Rufus, and foiled the cunning king-craft of his courtly successor by no other weapons than the nobleness of Christian simplicity. The injustice he met with in life has been atoned by an exceptional unanimity of posthumous homage. The name of Anselm comes down, through twenty generations, wreathed with a halo time has not dimmed; his memory is honoured, the very prayers he composed are still repeated, by many even of those who do not accept his creed. A modern author calls him 'the profoundest and most original writer that had appeared in the Latin Church since St. Augustine,'* and certainly the appearance of the *Cur Deus Homo* forms an epoch in the history of doctrine, as regards the Atonement. The theory, which had prevailed for nearly a thousand years in the Church, of a ransom paid to Satan by the death of Christ, and on which the Fathers had grounded its necessity, is here for the first time expressly and unreservedly rejected. There is no minute discussion of details; it is repudiated on the broad principle, so strangely overlooked before, that it contradicts the omnipotence or the goodness of the Creator to suppose, that He can recognize any right of evil and injustice in that universe which is His own. It is not denied that there was a certain *fitness* in the Devil being overcome by the wood of the cross, as he had overcome men by the wood of the tree of life, just as there is a fitness in the Redeemer being born of a woman, as the first man was deceived by a woman;

* *Essays and Reviews*, by R. W. Church (London, 1854), p. 125, where an admirable sketch of St. Anselm's career in England may be found. Is it vain to hope that the gifted author of this interesting volume will give us some further results of his singular capabilities for the illustration of mediæval Church history?

but these 'congruities' are 'a kind of pictures' that may be offered for the persuasion of unbelievers, not the ground of any solid theory. We belonged not to the Devil, but to God; and the 'handwriting against us' was not, as Leo had imagined, a compact with Satan, but the decree of God who allowed him to punish us when we became the slaves of sin. "There was no need for God to come down from heaven to overcome the Evil One or to make a compact with him for the delivery of man; but God required of man that he should overcome the Devil, and satisfy by righteousness the God he had offended by sin. For God owed nothing to the Devil except punishment, nor man anything but to conquer him by whom he had been overcome; whatever was required of man he owed to God, not the Devil."* But Anselm at the same time insisted, not only on the congruity but the absolute necessity of man's redemption, and on the death of Christ as the only possible means of effecting it, innovating in both respects on the teaching of former theologians. His explanation of the positive side of his system is scattered over the two books of the *Cur Deus Homo*, mixed up with incidental notices of many collateral questions, as of the primitive state of man, the bodily resurrection, the relations of human redemption to the fall of the angels, and the fitness of Christ's birth of a virgin. We must confine ourselves here to a statement of the theory itself, as he has laid it down.†

* *Cur Deus Homo*, xi. 19, ad fin. Cf. i. 7, throughout, also 3 and 4.

† It would be troublesome and confusing to the reader to give separate references for each statement. They shall be given where there is any special ground for it. The chapters from which the system is chiefly to be gathered are I. 11, 12, 13, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25; II. 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 19, 20.

It is impossible that mankind, as a whole, should fail to attain the end for which they were created, because it is inconsistent with the being of God to suffer any rational nature to perish completely, and thus fail to perfect the work He has begun.* Not that in speaking of necessity, though absolute, we are to view it as a power external to Him, like the ἀνάγκη of Greek mythology which limited and constrained the will of Zeus. Rather it is improperly called necessity, for it is part of His own nature, it is that immutability which belongs to His holiness, that supreme justice which is one with Himself.† But man has forsaken his true end by sin, and can only be restored to it by redemption. By sin he has robbed God of what was due to Him from human nature, and has, so far as was possible, deprived Him of a part of His honour *(Deum exhonorat);* he has committed an evil which, if not actually infinite,‡ is yet so great that the preservation of the universe would be too dearly purchased by the commission of any the slightest sin. And therefore he has incurred a debt, which can only be paid by something greater than the whole universe, greater than all that is outside God.§ But he has nothing to

* The author adds a reason, borrowed from St. Augustine, that men were created to supply the place of the fallen angels (i. 16-18), but this is immaterial to the coherence of his system. The necessity of man's restoration is maintained on independent grounds.

† Ib. ii. 5. Quæ scilicet necessitas non est aliud quam immutabilitas honestatis ejus, quam a se ipso et non ab alio habet, et idcirco improprie dicitur necessitas. Cf. i. 13. Summa justitia quæ non est aliud quam Ipse Deus. Cf. also ii. 18. *a.*

‡ In one place it is called 'infinitum,' but as being so great that it could not lawfully be committed to preserve an infinite number of worlds from destruction. ii. 14.

§ Cf. Ans. *De Concep. Virg. et Pec. Orig.* 21. Deus non exigit ab ullo peccatore plus quam debet, sed quoniam nullus potest reddere quantum debet, solus Christus reddidit pro omnibus plus quam debetur.

pay it with himself, for all that he has and is he owes to God as his Creator, without any reference to the compensation of sin. And this very inability to pay the debt is not an excuse, but is itself a sin, being caused by his own fault, and therefore is not a ground of free forgiveness. Nor, indeed, is free forgiveness possible. God cannot suffer anything to mar the perfect order of His kingdom. The sinner must either make adequate satisfaction to God, according to the measure of his sin, or endure the penalty. This satisfaction, to be equal to the sin, must be greater than anything outside God; and therefore only God can supply it; but it must be paid by man, or it is not man's satisfaction. "The debt was so great that none but God could pay it, and none but man owes it, therefore One must pay it who is God and man." Hence the necessity for the Incarnation. But the Incarnation would not suffice of itself. The perfect obedience of Christ, as Man, could be no satisfaction for sin, for obedience is due to God from every rational creature. But His death was not due, for death is an obligation incurred by sin; and His death accordingly, as a voluntary offering, is the sufficient and only possible satisfaction, which not only equals, but infinitely exceeds, the payment owed for the sins of the whole world. For this death, freely offered, He deserved a recompense from the Father. But He needed none for Himself, and could receive nothing that was not already His. He claimed, therefore, and justly received from the Father, as a reward, the salvation of those for whom He died. And thus mercy and justice are reconciled. For what more merciful than that the Father should say to the sinner, who has nothing

whereby to ransom himself from eternal punishment, 'Receive My only-begotten, and give Him for thyself,' and the Son say, 'Take Me and ransom thyself?' What more just than that He who receives a payment far exceeding the debt should remit the debt?

Such is a summary of the Anselmic theory of satisfaction. Its whole force hinges on the assumed impossibility of any incongruity *(inconvenientia)* being tolerated by God. *Deum non decet aliquid in regno suo inordinatum dimittere.* Both in its negative and positive aspects it differs widely from the patristic conception of the subject. The necessity for the death of Christ becomes for the first time absolute, not indeed any longer as a compensation due to Satan for the power over men acquired by their sin, which he was to lose by their redemption, but as a satisfaction to God for the honour of which sin had robbed Him. Not that Christ's death is regarded by Anselm, any more than by earlier writers, as a punishment inflicted on Him by the Father for our sins, but as a voluntary payment of the debt incurred by us when we could not pay it ourselves. It was essential to the justice or holiness of God, that sin should be either punished or atoned. Only the God-man could make adequate reparation, and He only by His death, for that alone He did not, in His human nature, owe to God.

It is obvious that the *Cur Deus Homo*, if taken, as the title might seem to imply, for an exhaustive account of the objects of the Incarnation, would be a strikingly defective one; and there are, in fact, many indications in the book itself that such was not the intention of its saintly author. We cannot doubt that he, like those before him, saw more, far more, in that

mystery of love than the mere payment of a debt. But even in the restricted sense, which it is clearly meant to bear, of an explanation of the death of Christ, his argument is open to very serious criticism. With the negative side of his theology, his rejection of Satan's supposed rights, we certainly need not quarrel, and here his judgment has been fully endorsed by the common instinct of the later Church. But, as regards his positive theory, even admitting the assumed premisses (contradicted as they are by the whole course of previous theology), of a debt incurred to God which it is absolutely impossible for Him freely to remit, the account given of the payment is, in more than one point, at issue with itself. I pass over the extreme difficulty of admitting a necessity, though explained as part of the divine nature, which seems to limit omnipotence, and goes far to assimilate the external operations to the immanent acts of God. But the statement of a *necessity* for the Incarnation is obviously inconsistent with making it also a free exhibition of love. For if God's honour *necessarily* required reparation, and only one was possible, then it was not for our sakes, but for His own, that He sent His Son into the world to die. Nor can it be replied that, according to Anselm's teaching, the honour of God is not really increased or diminished by anything external to Him, and cannot, therefore, be affected in itself by sin; for it is distinctly said to be essential to His honour that the order of the universe should be preserved, and that this can only be done by the punishment of the sinner, or by an equivalent for the sin.* That order, as we have seen,

* See especially *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 13, 14.

is broken if His object in the creation of man is frustrated, and therefore adequate satisfaction is an internal necessity of His own nature. The author's only attempt to meet this difficulty in fact admits its force.* When it is urged, that God in creating man foresaw both his fall and his redemption, but did not therefore shrink from the obligation He voluntarily assumed in creating him, this of course may show that creation was an act of love, but it implies that creation once premised, the Incarnation was an act of necessity. It was at least not a separate act of love. There is another inconsistency to be noticed. It is essential to the theory, that the death of Christ should be something He did not *owe* to God. But if satisfaction for sin was absolutely necessary for the divine honour, and His death alone could supply it, it follows, surely, that, as Man, He was morally bound to die, and thus His death ceases to be a voluntary oblation. This difficulty is more than once indirectly touched upon, but is never really answered.†

There was reason for dwelling thus at length on the argument of the *Cur Deus Homo*, because its author is the founder, or rather harbinger, of the whole scholastic method, and is also the first to explain the death of our Lord by a theory of satisfaction which refers it immediately, not to the rights acquired by the Evil One, but to inherent necessities of the divine nature. The principal succeeding writers of this first period may be considered according to their relations, whether of agreement or difference, with him. Conspicuous among them stand the names of Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux,

* Ib. ii. 5.

† Ib. i. 9. ii. 18, *b*. See on this point Petav. *De Incarn.* ix. 8.

'the last of the Fathers,' as he has been not unaptly designated, and Abelaird, who may with equal propriety be termed the first of the Schoolmen. The positive side of the Anselmic system is rejected by both. Abelaird's exposition of the grounds of the Incarnation and sufferings of Christ is given in his *Commentary on the Romans*, chiefly with reference to the famous passage (Rom. iii. 26), that God 'might be just, and justify the believer in Jesus.'* He not only assents to Anselm's denial of all rights in the Devil, but goes beyond him, urging, that man would rather have a right to punish the seducer, who had betrayed him by a promise of immortality he had no power to fulfil. The elect alone, it is added, were released by Christ, and they never belonged to Satan in this world or the next, which is proved by a strange application of the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Moreover, if no injustice was done to the Devil by the assumption of a sinless humanity, how could injustice have been done him by the far lesser grace of a free forgiveness? Some other reason must be found. To Anselm's view of an all but infinite debt, and the need of a corresponding equivalent, Abelaird replies, that Adam's sin, however great, could not be atoned by the yet greater crime of those who murdered Christ. And further, as Gregory Nazianzen had said before him, how could the blood of an innocent Victim be an acceptable ransom to God, to whom, if to any one, the ransom must be paid? Abelaird therefore seeks the ground

* This verse has been sometimes taken to imply the necessity of Christ's sacrifice, as a matter of justice, for our forgiveness. But if so, we must read καίπερ instead of καὶ. It clearly means, 'that He who is holy might bestow sanctification on believers.'

of the Incarnation, not in the justice, but the love of God, who might indeed have pardoned us without it, but selected this means as the most effectual for eliciting our love. The spectacle of Christ's spotless life, and obedience even unto death endured for us, was the most persuasive argument for withdrawing us from the service of sin, and making us meet to receive His grace. He is said, therefore, to have died for us, because in His Crucifixion He bore the penalty of our sins, and by His death drew us to Himself, commending His charity towards us by dying for us while we were yet sinners, and implanting love in our hearts through faith in Him. This includes the case of the old Patriarchs, who looked for His coming, though it applies still more to those who have lived since, as it is written, that 'those who went before and those who came after cried Hosanna to the Son of David.' And thus by grace we are pardoned on our repentance, its defects being supplied by the intercession of Christ, who, as Man, is bound by the law of charity to pray for us, and whose prayer, from His perfect holiness, cannot but be heard. Hence the need for His Incarnation. This theory places the ultimate grounds of the Atonement, not in the nature of God but of man, who required such a revelation of divine charity to recall him from sin.

St. Bernard,* I need scarcely remind the reader, was engaged in frequent controversy with Abelaird, chiefly about the doctrine of the Trinity, on which his

* Morison's *Life and Times of St. Bernard* (London, 1863) gives a very interesting biography of him, about half consisting very properly of translations from his Letters. The author does not dwell at any length on his character as a theologian, and is evidently not so familiar with that part of the subject.

language was, to say the least, difficult to reconcile with orthodox belief. It was natural, therefore, that on other subjects also his teaching should be received with suspicion. St. Bernard attacks his explanation of the Atonement mainly, as he assailed the belief in the Immaculate Conception, on account of its novelty, and as contravening the testimony of the ancient Fathers on the rights of Satan, a charge which it shared with St. Anselm's. To Abelaird's objection about the murderers of Christ he replied, in words already quoted, that it was not His death, but His voluntary acceptance of it, that was pleasing to the Father. He did not, however, any more than his opponent adopt the Anselmic theory of a debt incurred to God which could only be paid by the death of His Son. On the contrary, he falls back on the older opinion, which both Anselm and Abelaird had rejected, of the claim of Satan, to whom therefore the price was paid; though he so far modifies it as to admit, that it was only by divine permission the Devil could have any rights. He adds, that Christ made satisfaction as the Head of the Body, representing its members. The work of salvation includes three things; the humility by which God emptied Himself, the love which persevered even unto death, the 'sacrament of redemption' by which in dying He destroyed death. This last Abelaird is accused of denying by denying the rights of Satan, and of making the teaching and example of Christ the sole benefits of the Incarnation.* But he had not said so, and he distinctly asserts in his *Apology*, that 'the Son of God was incarnate to deliver us from the bondage of sin and yoke of the Devil, and to open

* Bern. *Ep.* 190 *ad Innoc.*

to us by His death the gate of eternal life.' And St. Bernard himself, in this very Epistle, distinctly denies any absolute necessity for the method of redemption chosen, and suggests a reason for it not so very unlike Abelaird's. "Perhaps that method is the best, whereby in a land of forgetfulness and sloth we might be more powerfully and vividly reminded of our fall, through the so great and so manifold sufferings of Him who repaired it." Elsewhere, when not speaking controversially, he says still more plainly; "Could not the Creator have restored His work without that difficulty? He could; but He preferred to do it at His own cost, *lest any further occasion should be given for that worst and most odious vice of ingratitude in man.**" What is this but to say with Abelaird, that He chose the Incarnation as the most effectual method for eliciting His creature's love?

Our countryman, Robert Pulleyn,† a teacher at Oxford and contemporary of St. Bernard and Abelaird, follows the latter, whose intimate friend he was, both in adopting Anselm's denial of the claims of Satan, and in rejecting the notion of an absolute necessity for the death of Christ, whose sufferings he views as giving us an example of patience and steadfastness, and as being, in some sense not accurately defined, requisite for our redemption. He offered His blood, not as a ransom to the Evil One, which would be a renunciation of His Godhead, but as a sacrifice to the Father.

* Bern. *Serm.* xi. *in Cant.*

† R. Pulleyn *Sententiarum Libri* viii. His wide divergence from the old theory is marked by his representing the dream of Pilate's wife as sent by the Devil, to *hinder* the death of Christ. Satan, therefore, was neither compensated nor deceived. Pulleyn was distinguished for Biblical learning. See Newman's *Office and Work of Universities* (Longman, 1856) p. 258.

Hugh of St. Victor, another writer of the same date, tries to harmonize all the previous systems. He recognizes in Satan a certain right of dominion acquired over man, though not any rights as against God. From this dominion man cannot free himself, except by God's assistance; but—and here the Anselmic notion comes in—God was Himself angry with man, and required to be propitiated by a perfect obedience to compensate Adam's apostasy, and by an adequate punishment to atone for the dishonour done to Himself. Man had neither to offer: therefore, what man owed, God gratuitously supplied in the Incarnation and death of His Son. Yet the author expressly denies any absolute necessity, and gives a reason for the Incarnation elsewhere, differing little if at all from Abelaird's, viz. that Christ gave us in His Passion a motive of love, in His resurrection a pledge of immortality, 'that He may be the Way by His example, the Truth by His promises, the Life by His reward.'* Richard of St. Victor has sometimes been represented as accepting in its entirety the argument of the *Cur Deus Homo*, which he has undoubtedly made great use of in his treatise on the Incarnation. But his language does not imply anything more than that the death of Christ was necessary, if an adequate satisfaction were to be made at all. He says it was required for *full* satisfaction, that 'there should be as great humility in the expiation as there had been presumption in the sin;' but this does not exclude other methods of satisfaction, or free forgiveness.†

* Hug. de S. Vict. *De Sacram.* 4, 10.

† Sine satisfactione hominem *ad plenum* reparari non posse, ad *plenitudinem* autem satisfactionis oportuisse, ut tanta esset humiliatio in expiatione quanta fuerat præsumptio in prævaricatione. Rich. S. Vict. *De Inc. Verbi*, 8.

The last writer of the twelfth century to be noticed here is Peter Lombard, Bishop of Paris, the 'Master of the Sentences.' That he retained the Patristic theory of the Devil's rights we have already seen (in chap. iii.), and his statement of it needs not to be repeated here. It was natural that, as a compiler of the opinions of the Fathers, he should do so. Yet in his hands it had lost much of its old technical meaning, and even where most distinctly stated, as in the passage quoted above, seems little more than a way of expressing our release from the power of sin. Thus he says, that Christ came into the strong man's house, that is into our hearts where the Devil ruled, "and so by Christ's blood, who pays that He had not taken, we are redeemed from sin, *and thereby from the Devil.* For he did not hold us, except by the bonds of our sins; those were the captive's chains." Here the idea receives a nobler and more spiritual interpretation. The writer also includes in our release from Satan our release from a debt or penalty incurred, in so far as Christ bore in His body the chastisement of our sins, and won for us by His cross a plenary remission in baptism, a partial remission in penance, of the temporal chastisements of sin. For thus overcoming Satan's power the incarnation of the God-man is required, who alone is sinless.* Elsewhere he says, that God had decreed not to admit us to His presence till there had been found as great humility in man as there had been pride in our first father; and this perfect sacrifice Christ alone could bring. He is careful to add, that God might have found other ways to save us.† But

* Pet. Lomb. *Sent.* iii. 19, A. D. † Ib. iii. 18, E.

where the 'Master' speaks out most clearly the positive side of his theology, it is substantially accordant with Abelaird's, in placing the need of reconciliation on the side of man, not of God. "The death of Christ justifies us by exciting His love in our hearts." And he pointedly insists, as was natural in a student of antiquity, on the principle which Cyril, Augustine, Leo, and other Fathers had laid down before him, that we are not to understand the Atonement as though a change were effected in the mind of God, and He began to love, when He had before hated us, as one enemy is reconciled to another. "We were reconciled to God, when He already loved us. *For He did not begin to love us from the time we were reconciled to Him by His Son's blood*, but before the world, and before we existed. How then were we reconciled to God when He loved us? On account of sin we were at enmity with Him, who had love toward us, even while we showed our enmity against Him by working iniquity.....Christ, therefore, is called a Mediator, because standing between men and God He reconciles them to God. But He reconciles them, by taking from the sight of God what offends in man, that is, by destroying sins which offended God and made us His enemies." And again; "He reconciled all believers by His death to God, since all were healed of their iniquity who by believing loved the humility of Christ, and by loving imitated it."*

So far, then, the positive side of St. Anselm's theory finds no support from succeeding writers. His rejection of the Devil's claim is gradually adopted, though

* Ib. iii. 19, A, F, G.

not without occasional protest. But his notion of an absolute necessity on God's part for the Incarnation and death of Christ is repudiated alike by all. Peter Lombard and Hugh of St. Victor, who in language seem at times to come nearest to him, are in fact the most widely removed from him.

In passing from the twelfth to the thirteenth century we approach the more systematic period of scholasticism, based on a study of Aristotle, and occupied, in great part, in drawing up elaborate commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, expanding them into an interminable series of wire-drawn and often unprofitable distinctions. It would, of course, be impossible to examine in detail this voluminous literature. But before proceeding to compare the two great leaders of the opposite schools of Scotists and Thomists, it will be well to take as a specimen one of the principal Commentators, and analyse his treatment of the question before us. No better or more favourable example can be selected than St. Bonaventure, who follows to a great extent the system of St. Anselm, but deserts him in the point essential to its internal coherence, the theory of an absolute necessity. He considers the question under six different heads.* 1. Was it fitting for human nature to be restored? which is of course answered in the affirmative. 2. Was 'satisfaction' the most fitting method of restoring it? 3. Could a mere creature make satisfaction for the whole human race? 4. Could any man, assisted by grace, make satisfaction for himself? 5. Ought God to have accepted the method of satisfaction by Christ's Passion?

* S. Bonav. *Opp.* tom. v. (Lugd. 1688) in lib. iii. *Sent. Dist.* 20.

6. Could He have saved the human race by any other method?

Let us take in order the replies given to these last five questions. 2. What method is most fitting must be considered in reference to the righteousness, omnipotence, wisdom, and majesty of God. Tested by this standard, the method of satisfaction is declared to be most consistent with His justice and mercy; His justice in requiring, His mercy in Himself supplying it; it is also most suitable for men, that they should procure their restoration through the means of satisfaction and merit, repairing by endurance of punishment the dishonour done to God by sin. It is then added, in reply to objections, that it would not be more fitting for God to display His mercy by a free forgiveness, because His mercy does not exclude His justice; that it is not to meet any want in God that satisfaction, any more than obedience, is required, but from regard to us; that it cannot be said He would have shown His omnipotence more fully by pardoning with a mere word, for in this work it was most essential to reveal His goodness and His justice; that mere forgiveness would not have been so constraining a claim on our thankfulness and love, because it is a far greater thing to die for men than only to forgive them; nor would it have set us a better example, for punishment belongs to God though not to man, and moreover by satisfaction God gave us a more perfect model; lastly, that it is a property of the Highest Good to employ, where possible, the coöperation of the creature in His noblest works, and this was possible in redemption though not in creation.

3. The next question is a favourite one with the

Schoolmen. Could any mere creature make satisfaction for the whole human race? The author replies by dividing satisfaction into that made for the injury, and that made for the loss. It is clear that no mere creature could make satisfaction for the injury done to God, on account of His greatness. But neither could he for the loss. No mere man could give an equivalent to God for the loss He suffered by Adam's sin, which extended over the whole race. Still less could a creature of some other order of being, as an angel, do so, for his satisfaction could have no relation to the sin of man. 4. As to whether a mere man, with the assistance of grace, could make satisfaction for his own sins, it is replied that he might make a partial, but not a plenary, satisfaction for actual, none for original sin; because original sin involves depravation not only of will but of nature. For this last none could make satisfaction who was not himself free from it, and who did not possess grace to be the Second Adam, or Head of the renewed race *(gratiam communem hoc est gratiam Capitis)*. Hence Christ alone could atone for original sin, and He by doing so won grace for men, whereby they are enabled to make satisfaction for their own actual sins. His Passion, therefore, acts more fully in the sacrament of baptism, which remits original, than in the sacrament of penance, which remits actual sin.

5. To the fifth question Bonaventure answers, that the most fitting method of satisfaction for God to accept was the Passion and Death of Christ, because it is the noblest that can be conceived, and that on four grounds. It was the most acceptable for appeasing God, the most suitable for curing the disease of sin, the most effectual for attracting the human race, and

the wisest for overcoming the enemy of man. It was the most pleasing to God, because, as Anselm said, the hardest, and therefore most precious free-will offering man can make in token of entire self-sacrifice is voluntary death. As man had sinned through pride, lust, and disobedience, the fittest cure was humility, pain, and fulfilling of the divine law. In no other way could God so effectually elicit the love of men as by dying for them on the Cross; and without winning their love He could not save them, for He would not force their free-will. Finally, as Satan overcame man by treachery, so Christ overcame Satan by prudence, 'drawing Leviathan with a hook.' Objections are then stated and answered. It may be said that Christ's life is more precious than His death; but the greatest satisfaction is the most painful, and to be willing to die for God's honour is a more heroic act of perfection and charity than to be willing to live for it. It may be objected again, that the sin of Adam cannot be atoned by the greater sin of the murderers of Christ. But the Atonement is made by Him, not by His murderers; and it is a conspicuous evidence of Divine wisdom to draw good out of evil, nay, to draw the highest good. If it is further urged, that Christ should then have suffered twice, once for Adam's sin, once for the greater sin of those who slew Him, it is replied, that the merits of His sufferings exceed infinitely the guilt of the traitor Judas, of the Jews who instigated His death, and the Gentiles who accomplished it.

6. The last question concerns the necessity of this method of satisfaction. And here Bonaventure is in direct collision with Anselm. He admits, indeed, that

on man's side no other method was possible, but with God all things are possible. To the objection, that no method but satisfaction consists with the divine justice, and that only the death of the God-man could make adequate satisfaction, he replies, first, that God might, had He so willed, have saved us by way of mercy and not of justice, and still nothing would have been left disordered *(inordinatum)* or even unpunished in the universe, for sin brings its own punishment with it; secondly, though Christ's death was the most fitting satisfaction, any, the very slightest, suffering of His would perhaps have been sufficient, as it is written, 'with Him is plenteous redemption' (Ps. cxxix. 7.) St. Bonaventure concludes by expressing his 'firm belief,' that the human race could have been *delivered* by other methods, but will not pronounce whether or not it could have been otherwise *redeemed*.* No one will be disposed to quarrel with the conclusion, but it is not very easy to reconcile with all that has gone before. If penal satisfaction were so demonstrably the method most becoming the attributes of God and the condition of man, it is difficult to conceive any other being adopted; and if sin would in any case have adequately punished itself, the argument for a penal satisfaction being requisite is undermined. The *Cur Deus Homo* is more consistent here.

Alexander of Hales, and Albert the Great come nearer to Anselm's view. Alexander begins, it is true, by admitting that according to that justice which

* De *liberatione* enim firmiter credo, quod alio modo potuit liberari, de *redemptione* vero nec nego nec audeo affirmare, quia temerarium est, cum de divina potentia agitur, terminum præfigere ei. Amplius enim potest quam nos possumus cogitare.

is identical with His essence, and therefore with His power, God could have saved man without satisfaction, though according to that justice which goes by congruity of merits He could not. But the admission does not go for much. For he afterwards decides, with Anselm, that had God used His absolute power to pardon man, He would have left something disordered *(inordinatum)* in His kingdom, which is as impossible as for Him to do evil; and no satisfaction could be adequate but that of the God-man.* Albert the Great comes to a similar conclusion, on the ground that original sin could only be remitted through One who was the second Head of the race, and, as it would be monstrous to have two heads in the natural order, the second must be in the supernatural order; or, in other words, must be Christ, who, as God, can alone impart grace to the mystical body.†

We come now to the founders of the two great schools of Thomists and Scotists, which have existed from that day to this in the Church; and we shall find them differing, as on other points, so also in their view of the Atonement, a difference partly grounded on their opposite views of the motive of the Incarnation. With the Thomist doctrine of grace, and all the controversies that have been raised upon it, we are not concerned here. The reasoning of Aquinas on the Atonement is contained in four Questions of the *Summa*, from which I will extract the points most deserving of notice.‡ He treats in order the sufferings of Christ, their efficient cause, and their results. As regards the question

* Alex. Hales *Summa*, Pars iii. Q. i. 4, 7.

† Alb. Magn. *Comment. in Sent.* iii. 20, art. 7.

‡ *Summa D. Thom. Aq.* Pars iii. Q. 46-49.

of necessity, taking the Aristotelian division of internal necessity, and external coaction, he denies that in either of these senses the Passion was necessary. It was only necessary, assuming the prevision and predestination of God to redeem man in that manner, and in no other; nor would He have acted against justice in forgiving without any satisfaction offences committed only against Himself. He was not (as Grotius afterwards represented the case) in the position of a civil ruler who cannot lawfully remit the penalty of offences committed, not against himself personally, but against the common weal. At the same time, however, the Passion of Christ was the most suitable method of redemption, as revealing the love of God, giving us an example of obedience and all other virtues, and a strong incitement to purify ourselves from sin after being redeemed at so great a price. Moreover Christ not only freed us from sin, but won for us grace and glory, and it was fitting that by death He should overcome the power of death; but His death need not have been a violent one. The greatness of His pains, above all others in this life, is inferred from His suffering at the hands of such various classes of persons, such various kinds of pain, in soul and body, and in every part of His body, and from the peculiar capabilities for suffering of His mental and bodily organization, as it is written; *Ego in flagella paratus sum.* The manner in which His sufferings take effect on us is fourfold; by merit, satisfaction, sacrifice, and redemption. As Head of the mystical Body, He imparts to all His members the grace He has merited for them. His satisfaction for the same reason is applicable to them, and is not only sufficient but superabundant, from the greatness of His

dignity, His sufferings, and His love. Satisfaction is defined, as giving to the offended party something he loves as much as he hates the offence, or more. The Passion of Christ is also the most perfect sacrifice, that is, the highest act of homage ever offered to God, of which the Jewish sacrifices were types. Lastly, it ransoms us from the bondage and punishment of sin. Under all these four aspects the Passion of Christ benefits us, and its fruits are applied to us by faith, not a dead faith, but faith working by love *(fides formata)*, and through the sacraments. In baptism we are conformed to the image of His death by dying to original sin; we must be conformed to Him by acts of penance for sins committed after baptism, but such acts gain all their efficacy from His superabundant satisfaction, for no mere man can satisfy adequately for himself. His Passion, then, has reconciled us to God, both as being the most acceptable sacrifice, and as removing the sin which caused our separation, and thus it has opened to us the gate of heaven. The idea of a vicarious satisfaction seems to be more prominently exhibited here than before, and the means of applying Christ's merits through a living faith, and the sacraments of faith, is more explicitly and fully laid down. Before making further comment, it will be well to state briefly the Scotist theory, that we may be in a position to compare the two.

In his *Commentary* on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, Duns Scotus contradicts much of the Thomist, and the whole Anselmic view of satisfaction.* The merit of Christ, as depending on His finite human

* Joann. Duns Scoti *In Sent. Pet. Lomb.* iii. 19, 20.

nature, is itself finite, and has no inherent claim to be accepted by God, as infinite. But the value of meritorious acts is measured by God's acceptance, not His acceptance by their value, as the goodness of creatures depends on His love, not His love on their goodness. And there is a certain *congruity*, from the dignity of Christ, which there would not else be, in God accepting His merits for any, even infinite, number of persons to whom they may be applied. His Passion, therefore, suffices for so many, and so great sins, as God is pleased to accept it for. But neither is it true, that sin is formally in its own nature an infinite evil, though in a certain sense it may be so called *(sortitur quamdam denominationem extrinsecam)*, as being a departure from the infinite Good, just as the love of a Saint or of the archangel Michael may be called infinite, from its being directed to an infinite object. It follows, that the punishment due to mortal sin is in no other sense infinite, than as being of infinite duration, so long as the will remains fixed in sin; God might, without injustice, punish it for a single day only, and then annihilate the soul. There was no *necessity* either for the restoration of the human race at all, or for the method of restoring it by the satisfaction of Christ, except as consequent on divine predestination, for all God's external operations are free.* Adam might have made satisfaction for his sin by a greater act of love; nor is it true to say, with Anselm, that the sin was infinite, and the love offered in reparation must be infinite too.

* See Faber (*Precious Blood*, p. 225). "It (the Precious Blood) is a magnificent price for sin, because it is infinite; and sin is only infinite by a figure of speech, or an invention of the mind. *We did not therefore require an infinite redemption;* though on the side of God's sanctity there may have been a propriety, looking to us like a necessity, for an infinite expiation."

The act of conversion to God is not in its formal nature greater than all creatures, nor was even the love of Christ. A good angel, or a mere man conceived without sin by the power of the Holy Ghost, could have made satisfaction for the whole race, had God chosen to accept it; nor will Anselm's objection hold good, that we should have been more bound to him than to God, for all his merit would have been derived from God, as is all the merit of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. Christ suffered for righteousness' sake, seeing the sins of the Jews and their ill regulated and perverted affection for their law, so that they sacrificed its moral to its ceremonial precepts; "wishing, therefore, to withdraw them from error by His works and discourses, He preferred dying to keeping silence, for then the Jews had to listen to the truth, and thus He died for righteousness' sake." He offered His Passion to the Father for us, and we are not the less, but the more indebted to Him for doing so, since He might have redeemed us without it. It is clear how this part of the Scotist system, which was substantially adopted by the Franciscan William Occam and the Nominalist school generally, cuts at the roots of the Thomist, and still more of the Anselmic conception of the question. For an infinite merit it substitutes a voluntary acceptance, while the denial of an infinite debt removes any plea for the necessity of an infinite satisfaction. There are certainly parts of the scheme which are difficult to reconcile with the inherent distinction of good and evil, and look as if morality had no independent existence, but were an arbitrary creation of the Divine will. Nor is it consistent with the reality of the hypostatic union to ascribe an only finite

character to the human, or, as they are sometimes called, 'theandric' actions of the God-man.* At the same time, the Scotist view, as a whole, is more consistent than the Thomist, which rejects the necessity of the sufferings of Christ, while laying so predominant a stress on the idea of satisfaction.

But there was in fact another, and far more fundamental, difference between the 'subtle' and 'angelic' doctors, in their way of regarding the Atonement, which, if it did not at the time exercise so perceptible an influence over their modes of expression, could not but make itself in the long run more deeply felt; for it materially affected the relative importance and bearings of the whole question. I refer to their opposite views of the primary motive of the Incarnation. This, according to Aquinas, was the redemption of fallen man. If there had been no sin, Christ would not have come in the flesh; in the prevision of His conception was included the prevision of His cross. Against this Duns Scotus urges, that His human nature was predestined antecedently to the Fall, and was the model on which ours was formed; and that Christ would, in any case, have come to be the Second Adam and Head of the mystical body.† He considers this view most congruous to the honour of God; most accordant with the testimony of Scripture, especially in such passages as the first chapters of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and not inconsistent with the language of the Fathers, who need not mean more, when they

* The Bull of Clement VI. *Unigenitus* (1343) implicitly condemns this portion of Scotus' system.

† Joann. Duns Scoti *Summa*, Pars III. Quæst. i. Art. 3. (Opp. tom. iv. Rome, 1737.)

seem to contradict it, than that Christ would not have come in a passible body, if we had not sinned.

To enter on a detailed discussion of the scriptural argument would be out of place here. It is sufficient to observe, that the line of interpretation suggested by Scotus certainly opens out to us a deeper meaning in many passages of Holy Writ, both in the Old and New Testament; while such statements as that of our Lord Himself, that He is come 'to seek and to save that which is lost,' and the noble supplication of the hymn founded upon it,* miss none of their constraining force, even if it be true that He would have come to be our Brother, though we had needed no redemption. As regards the Fathers, an opinion has already been expressed, that the Scotist view of the Incarnation is most consistent with the general spirit of their teaching; but the question never came directly before them for adjudication. The greater number of passages quoted by advocates of the opposite side, such as Thomassin and Petavius, though not all of them, may be understood as stating the purposes for which Christ actually did come, after we had fallen, or as referring to the altered conditions under which He came, in a corruptible body, or as meaning that but for our sins He would not have died on the cross. Neither, indeed, if it could be shown that some or most of the Fathers express or imply the converse of an opinion, which in their day had never been put forward, would it at all follow that the opinion was not in fact a legitimate development of their belief. What is certain is,

* "Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa Tuæ viæ,
Ne me perdas illa die.

"Quærens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus;
Tantus labor non sit cassus."

that they attach to the 'sacrament' or 'economy' of the Incarnation, considered in itself and apart from the Passion, a significance quite disproportionate to what it bears in many later schemes of doctrine. And more, while most of them regard the death of Christ as a ransom paid to Satan, none hold such a payment to have been necessary for our redemption. The Anselmic notion of its exclusive, or almost exclusive object being the discharge of a debt to God, incurred by sin, and still more the Lutheran idea of a literal punishment of our sins inflicted vicariously by the Father on His spotless Son, are foreign to their whole habit of thought. On the contrary, their way of looking at the matter seems to imply a belief, that in any case the predestined method for perfecting our nature, and bringing us into full communion with God, was the Incarnation of His Son. We have seen, again, how some of the greatest Fathers, like St. Augustine, are specially careful to point out the priority of the idea of sacrifice to the idea of sin, and in this they are followed by later Catholic divines. Sacrifice is the spontaneous expression of the homage due from the creature to his Creator, and the purest Heathen sacrifices were those which simply expressed this idea. Sin impressed on it, as on all human acts of devotion, an additional character of reparation. But from the beginning it was not so. If man had never fallen, the most perfect sacrifice would still have been offered to the Eternal Father in the human life, though not in the death, of Jesus; for it is the will that consecrates the outward act. *Oblatus est quia Ipse voluit.* To repeat once more the memorable words of St. Bernard, *Non mors sed voluntas sponte morientis placuit.* Without the Fall

there would have been no Passion; perhaps, but only perhaps, there would have been no Eucharist. The earliest recorded type of communion is the tree of life in Paradise, the great prefigurement of the Christian sacrifice is the bloodless offering of Melchisedec, and that was not a sacrifice for sin. It is anyhow beyond dispute, that the Incarnation need not presuppose the Fall.

A few words will suffice to indicate the bearing of the Scotist theory, which, though by no means universally accepted, has obtained the general suffrage of the later Church, on our way of regarding the Atonement. The very title of the *Cur Deus Homo* loses its meaning in the sense in which the author applied it. Theories about ransom and satisfaction, though not therefore rejected, sink into subordination to a higher truth, when the Incarnation is no longer looked upon as a merciful after-thought, to remedy man's corruption and make reparation to the wounded majesty of God, but as the fulfilment of an eternal purpose, modified indeed, but only modified, by sin into a deeper act of love. Bethlehem and Calvary are transfigured with a more exceeding brightness, yet the brightness of a sunshine all our own, when they are seen to reveal, under the conditions of time, and the pathetic incidents suited to our fallen state, the unutterable yearning of a Love which knows no change, to win our hearts, and make our natures His.

The full extent of the difference between these two theories did not, as has already been remarked, make itself felt at once. We sometimes find St. Thomas using language that would seem rather to belong to

the opposite school,* nor is it to be imagined, that so great a mind as his would rest in any exclusive system. In their view of the satisfaction of Christ the Nominalists and Franciscans for the most part followed Duns Scotus, while the Dominicans naturally ranged themselves under the banners of Aquinas, but not without exceptions or modifications on either side. Thus the Dominican Durandus of St. Pacian denies that Christ satisfied in strict rigour of justice, because all He had, as Man, was already owed to God; Raymund Lully, the Franciscan, goes beyond, or rather against Scotus, in maintaining the necessity of the Incarnation, assuming the creation of man, as the perfection and crown of human nature. But we need not examine in detail the later scholastic writers, who add little new to what the great masters had said before them. It is worth while to observe that Wicliffe, the precursor of the Reformation, recurred to the Anselmic view of an absolute necessity for the Incarnation, as the only adequate satisfaction for Adam's sin, though his argument differs in some respects from that of the *Cur Deus Homo*.† He gives a strange reason why Satan cannot be saved. As it was needful for the Second Person of the Trinity to be incarnated for man's redemption, who had sinned against the Wisdom of God, the Third Person must have been incarnated for the redemption of Satan, who had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is therefore unpardonable, because no such Incarnation can possibly take place!

* Thus, *e. g.* he calls our Lord, 'similitudo exemplaris totius naturæ.' *Summa*, Pars III. Quæst. i. Art. 8.

† John Wicliffe *Trialog.* iii. 24, 25. *De Inc. et Morte Christi.* He considers all God's external operations, and the Incarnation among them, absolutely necessary.

To sum up the Scholastic period; we have found, at its commencement, the idea of an absolute necessity for the Incarnation and death of Christ, as the only possible means of restoring fallen man, put forward for the first time by Anselm, but very generally rejected by subsequent writers of whatever school. On the other hand, the doctrine of satisfaction first distinctly enunciated by him becomes the subject of elaborate discussion, and branches out eventually into the two opposite theories of a superabundant satisfaction which had an inherent claim to be accepted, and a satisfaction, sufficient indeed, but relying for its efficacy on a free acceptance from the mercy (not the justice) of God. Meanwhile, underlying these notions, two opposite views of the motive of the Incarnation develope themselves, destined to exercise an influence on the course of later theology, which only the next great epoch in Church history will adequately reveal. We shall then find the more rigid and technical notion of satisfaction, already adopted by Wicliffe, assuming a critical importance in the Lutheran and Calvinistic systems, where the Scotist view of the Incarnation could have little meaning, while as that view gradually spreads among Catholic theologians, the broader and nobler idea of sacrifice predominates within the Church.

Two writers of the fifteenth century may be briefly noticed in conclusion, who, though following to a great extent scholastic opinions, can hardly be reckoned among the Schoolmen, because their method is entirely different—the Spanish Raymund of Sabunde, and Cardinal Nicolas of Cusa. The former has composed a *Theologia Naturalis* (which I need hardly remind the reader does not mean what we understand by 'Natural

Theology') designed to exhibit in detail the conformity of Christian doctrine with our natural anticipations, and the eternal fitness of things. His results do not greatly differ from those of St. Thomas; but he follows the reasoning, and not unfrequently uses the language, of the *Cur Deus Homo*, rather than of the *Summa*. Man owed to God a natural debt of perfect obedience as His creature, and since the Fall he owes a second debt of satisfaction for sin. Merit is measured by the person towards whom an act is done; and as obedience to God deserved an infinite recompence, the enjoyment of Himself, disobedience incurred an infinite debt. This no man could pay, being himself involved in the guilt, and no angel, who himself is finite; God alone can pay what only man owes, therefore He who pays must be God and man. To restore man, against the resistance of his corrupt will, is a greater work than to create him out of nothing. But all the requisite conditions meet in Christ. His *death* is necessary, because that alone He does not owe as man to God; but He cannot kill Himself, and must therefore endure it at the hands of others, whose sinful life is rebuked by the unfailing holiness of His teaching and example, and whom Satan instigates to slay Him. The merit of His acts is doubly infinite, both from His own nature and from that of God, to whom they are offered, but He needs and can receive no reward for Himself, and therefore accepts as His reward our redemption; and thus mercy and justice are reconciled. His death was necessary for the satisfaction of sin, and it is against the wisdom of God for all mankind to perish. There is much in this to remind us of St. Anselm, but the treatment is partly different, and there is no such

stringent statement of the absolute necessity of satisfaction.*

Nicolas of Cusa has not written a system of Theology, but he deals with several detached questions, partly metaphysical, partly theological. In speaking of the 'mystery of Christ's death' he dwells chiefly, like the Fathers, on His human nature containing in itself that of all men, and thus atoning for all, as all are baptized into His death, and united with Him in His resurrection. Elsewhere he refers with approval to the *Cur Deus Homo*, though somewhat modifying its statements. But he does not treat the question at length, or in a systematic way.†

* Raim. de Sabund. *Theol. Nat.* Solisb. 1852, Pars vi. pp. 412, *sqq.*

† Nic. de Cus. *Opp.* Basil. De Doct. Ignor. iii. pp. 50, 51. Exercit. iii. 418, 419.

CHAPTER V.

THEORIES OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

We have now reached the period of the Reformation, and it therefore becomes necessary to exhibit at some length the views of the Atonement put forward by the various Protestant leaders, in so far as they are based on an acceptance of the traditional belief of Christendom about the Person of our divine Lord. Where that is rejected, as by the Socinians and later Rationalists, the terms for a comparison are wanting, and we should be led aside from our proper subject into the wide question of the limits and nature of revelation. Moreover Socinianism, like its Arian prototype, has never been able to construct a *theology* for itself, as was sorrowfully confessed not long since by its greatest representative in this country, whose own published Sermons, I may venture to add, sufficiently attest its failure to satisfy such minds as his.* On the Socinian

* "I am constrained to say, that neither my intellectual preference nor my moral admiration goes heartily with the Unitarian heroes, sects, or productions of any age. Ebionites, Arians, Socinians, all seem to me to contrast unfavourably with their opponents, and to exhibit a type of thought far less worthy on the whole, of the true genius of Christianity. *I am conscious that my deepest obligations are in almost every department to writers not of my own creed.* In philosophy I have had to unlearn most that I had imbibed from my early text books, and the authors most in favour with them. In Biblical interpretation I

view, the benefits of Christ's incarnation are necessarily limited to His proclamation of the divine promises, the perfect example of His life, and still more of His death, and His pure utterance of the moral and spiritual law; and they even included in this last His revelation of the Lord's Prayer, forgetting that it was already in use among the Jews. His teaching and example were guaranteed by His death and resurrection, which also gave a pledge of ours, and He is henceforth to be adored as a glorified Man, our King and High Priest in heaven.* But there could be no room for a real mediation between man and God, where there was no real union of the divine and human natures in the Person of the Incarnate Word. The specific objections of Socinus, however, are mainly directed against the moral and theological aspects of the system originated by the earlier Reformers, as to satisfaction, imputed righteousness, and justification by faith; and are, many of them, perfectly just. We shall have occasion to refer to them again in this connection by and by.†

It has been already observed, that there was little of direct controversy raised between Catholic and Protestant writers on the doctrine of the Atonement, nor

derive from Calvin and Whitby the help that fails me in Crell and Belsham. In devotional literature and religious thought I find nothing of ours that does not pale before Augustine, Taylor, Pascal. And in the poetry of the Church it is the Latin or German hymns, or the lines of Charles Wesley or of Keble, that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and cold. ..... I cannot help this. I can only say I am sure it is no perversity; and I believe the preference is founded on reason and nature, and is already widely spread among us." Martineau's *Letter to Macdonald* (London, 1859), quoted in *Christian Remembrancer*, Jan. 1864, pp. 204, 205.

* See Möhler's *Symbolism*, vol. ii. p. 335, *sqq.* (Robertson's Translation.)

† Socinus' system on the Atonement is to be gathered from his *Prælect. Theol.*, *Breviss. Instit. Christ. Relig.*, *Refut. Sent. Vulg. de Satisf. Christi*, and *De Jesu Christo Servatore.*

did any fresh definitions on the subject emanate from the Council of Trent. The Tridentine *Catechism*, though not possessing direct dogmatic authority,* is universally accepted and used in the Church, as containing a clear and luminous exposition of Christian doctrine on the Creed, Sacraments, Decalogue, and Lord's Prayer. In commenting on the fourth article of the Apostles' Creed, it recounts the 'benefits merited for us by the Passion of Christ,' which are summed up under the four heads of a full and entire satisfaction offered 'after a certain admirable manner' to the Father, a most acceptable sacrifice to God, a redemption from our vain conversation, and a bright example of patience, humility, charity, obedience, meekness, and constancy even unto death.† No explanations are added of questions disputed among the Schoolmen, or stirred at the Reformation. The expression on which some of the Reformers so strenuously insisted, that the death of Christ reconciled God to us, is not used at all in the Catechism, which confines itself to stating, in the language of Scripture, that He reconciled us to God.‡ But if no issue was raised on what may be called the objective side of the doctrine of Atonement, its subjective side, or, in other words, the doctrines of original sin and justification, formed, I need hardly say, matter of prolonged and vigorous controversy, and elicited from the

* When the controversy on grace and freewill (*De Auxiliis*) was under discussion before the Roman tribunals, the Jesuits protested against the *Catechismus ad Parochos* being appealed to as having a symbolic character, and their objection was admitted. Cf. Möhler *Symb.* v. i. pp. 18-20. But it possesses the highest sanction as a Catechetical manual.

† *Cat. ad Par.* Paro. i. c. 5. Q. 15.

‡ Ib. i. l. 3. The *Augsburgh Confession* (Art. 3) says, 'ut reconciliaret nobis Patrem,' language which is of course capable of various interpretations.

Council of Trent a full and elaborate statement of doctrine. Part of the fifth, and the whole of the sixth Sessions were occupied with this subject. It is here accordingly that we must look for the specialities of the Reformed systems, and it is in this connection, in accordance with their exclusively subjective spirit, that they treat the Atonement; but of course differences on the one point imply differences on the other too.* The imputation, for instance, of our sins to Christ, and His righteousness to us, are only opposite sides of the same idea.†

The two great Confessions inaugurated by Luther and Calvin are agreed in their rejection of the Catholic doctrine on the primitive state of man, the Fall, justification, and the need of personal satisfaction for personal sin, which implies, under whatever name, the notion of a purgatory. But they differ in some respects from each other, and therefore require separate examination. We will afterwards notice the later Protestant developments, which had their origin, for the most part, in a recoil from the extreme views of Luther and Calvin, and manifest, amid many grave errors, a decided tendency on these points to recur to a healthier tone, as is shown even in the Socinian protest against Luther's illogical ascription to faith of a merit he denies to obedience.‡

* Luther accordingly, in the Smalcaldic articles, classes not only justifying faith, but 'redemption' among the doctrines at issue between Protestantism and 'the Papacy, the Devil, and the world.'

† Our view of the Atonement is of course necessarily determined by our view of original sin. It is with perfect consistency, therefore, that an able Reviewer of Newman's *Apologia* in the *Westminster Review* for Oct. 1864, after asserting that 'man has undergone *no* terrible aboriginal calamity,' adds, 'there has been .... no need for a Sacrifice of Blood.'

‡ Socin. *De Jesu Chr. Servatore*, iv. 11. 'Quasi vero major dignitas in ista fide, quam in hac obedientia reperiatur,' *et sqq.*

For understanding rightly the point of departure of the Reformed systems, it is necessary to indicate their relations to the Catholic doctrine on the state of innocence and the Fall, for here the root of all further differences will be found to lie. I must, therefore, before proceeding further, claim my readers' indulgence for what I fear they may consider a somewhat dry and technical exposition of doctrine; it shall be made as brief as is consistent with clearness of statement.

That God 'made man upright' was agreed on all hands; but Catholic theology distinguished between that integrity of nature, in which Adam was created after the image of God, with the body subject to the mind, and all the inferior faculties and instincts under perfect controul of the reason, and that gift of supernatural grace *(originalis justitia)* superadded as a crown to the endowments of his unfallen nature, which raised him to communion with his Maker, and fitted him to be the heir of a blessed immortality. This gift, called in Scripture 'the likeness of God,' was held to be bestowed on man at his creation, or shortly afterwards—a point left open purposely by the Council of Trent—but must in either case be carefully distinguished from the perfection of nature.* By sin man

* Scholastic theology distinguishes a state of *pura natura* as possible, though never actual, in which our various natural faculties would exist, but without being duly harmonized; the state of *integra natura* in which many suppose Adam to have been actually created and to have awhile remained, where all the lower faculties are perfectly under controul of the reason, and the soul is capable of knowing and loving God; the state of *originalis justitia* to which man was supernaturally raised by grace, either at or after his creation, whereby he became holy and pleasing to God; the state of *lapsa natura*, when this gift is lost, and the natural faculties disordered; and, lastly, the state of *redempta natura*, wherein grace is restored, but the conflict between the higher and lower faculties *(concupiscentia)* remains, making us liable to sin. Bp. Bull defends at length

lost this gift of original righteousness, and marred, though he did not lose, his natural faculties for good. He was deprived of his supernatural and wounded in his natural powers; or, to adopt the language of Bellarmine, he lost the similitude, but retained the image of God. Original sin consists, *formally* in the loss of that supernatural gift, *materially* in the disorder of his natural faculties which followed on its withdrawal, and, as some maintain, would have occurred sooner or later, had the gift never been bestowed. This disorder, or 'concupiscence,' is not itself sinful, being involuntary, but is certain, when uncontrouled by grace, to lead men into sin (James i. 15). Freewill was impaired, but not destroyed, and man was therefore able to coöperate with grace when offered, but unable of himself to do any acts pleasing to God, and deserving eternal beatitude. This deprivation of supernatural grace, with its moral and natural consequences, implying further the loss of his claim to supernatural beatitude, our first parent transmitted to his posterity; but not, of course, his personal guilt, or, as was strangely imagined by the Reformers, any positive evil quality—and they could only be restored by the merits of Christ to the state of grace which he had forfeited. Man cannot merit or obtain restoration for himself, but he can and must coöperate freely with the grace of God calling him to repentance, and this is sometimes termed in scholastic language 'merit of congruity.' On his true repentance he is forgiven, and with remission of sin the love of God is infused into his heart, and he is thus not only accounted but made righteous, and en-

the Catholic doctrine of the 'Primitive State of Man' with copious extracts from the Fathers.

abled to do works pleasing to God and deserving eternal life. Justification and sanctification are different names for the same thing, accordingly as it is viewed in its origin or its nature, except that, in ordinary language, justification is used for the initial act on the part of God in a process of which sanctification, in its fullest sense, is the gradually accomplished result; they stand to each other in the spiritual life, as birth in the natural life to the gradual advance to maturity. The sinner is justified, not by a bare acquittal, or by some juridical fiction of a transfer of Christ's merits, as though they were his own, but by the gift of inherent righteousness, or indwelling of the Holy Ghost, bestowed (primarily in baptism) for the merits of Christ. That gift though not *of* him is *in* him, and he is thereby also sanctified, not in name but in reality. Hence all merit, properly speaking, is ultimately derived from that of the Redeemer, and in crowning our merits God crowns His own gifts.*

And now let us turn to the Lutheran idea of the primitive state of man and of original sin, which shall be described, as concisely as the case admits, before we proceed to notice the views of the Atonement based upon it in the Protestant formularies.† Luther denied

* The reader may consult for a fuller account *Canones Conc. Trid.* Sess. vi.; especially cap. 7. Möhler's *Symbolism*, vol. i. ch. 1-3; and the appendix to Newman's *Lectures on Justification* (2nd ed. London, 1840), where the views of several writers, as well Catholic as Protestant, are given and discussed. It is a strange misapprehension when a modern German writer (Baur *von Der Versöhnung*, pp. 350, 351) insists that the Catholic Church before the Reformation always taught an *independent and coördinate* merit of man in the work of justification. The Church, then as now, taught the coöperation of the human *will* in the process, and the reality of human merit in the works of those already justified, which are wrought by grace, and therefore are acceptable to God.

† The main authorities for the Lutheran doctrine, besides of course the writings of the chief Lutheran divines, are the *Augsburg Confession* (1530) with

the supernatural character of man's original sanctity, and considered it part of the essence of human nature, wherein both the capabilities *and the acts* of virtue are implanted by God. It followed, of course, that there could be no real freedom of will, since our acts are simply God's, and Luther accordingly asserts this in the strongest terms in his work, *De Servo Arbitrio*, expressly sanctioned by the *Formulary of Concord;* so also did Melancthon at first, though on this, as on other points, he afterwards recoiled from his master's teaching. As original righteousness was part of man's *nature*, he lost an integral part of his nature at the Fall. In the strange language of the *Augsburg Confession*, he is '*born with sin*, without fear of God or confidence in Him;' in the language of the *Formulary of Concord*, he had lost all, even the slightest, capacity and aptitude, and power in spiritual things; he had lost the natural faculty of knowing God, and the will of doing anything whatever good; he could neither begin, nor operate, nor coöperate, more than a stock or a stone; he had not the smallest spark of spiritual powers, and the image of God, or the whole spiritual part of his nature, was utterly obliterated. These statements, and they might be multiplied indefinitely, seem strong enough, but this is not all. For that

Melancthon's *Apology*, Luther's *Smalcaldic Articles* (1537), the *Formulary of Concord* (1577) including the *Epitome* and *Solid Declaration*, and Luther's two *Catechisms*, called the 'Bible of the Laity,' to which may perhaps be added Melancthon's *Loci Theologici*, as containing a clearer and more consistent exposition of Lutheran tenets than is always to be found in the works of the Reformer himself. Where no reference is given, my statements of Lutheran doctrine are derived from these sources. It need hardly be observed, that many of the more repulsive features of the Lutheran system have practically dropped out of the religious belief of those who still accept its formularies. Some evidence of this will be given further on in the volume.

positive part of his nature which man had lost there was substituted a *positive quality of sin*, whatever that may mean. Sin, according to Luther, is of the essence of man. Original sin, transmitted from father to son, is not, as the Church taught, the loss of supernatural grace with the consequent disorder of natural faculties; it is not even simply the loss of an integral portion of human nature; it is something born of father and mother—the clay of which we were formed is damnable, the fœtus in the womb is sin, man with his whole nature and essence is not only a sinner but sin. Such are the expressions of Luther, endorsed by Quenstedt. Melancthon and the *Formulary* are equally explicit. Man receives from his parents a congenital evil force, a native impulse to sin; there is substituted in the place of the image of God an 'intimate, most evil, most profound, inscrutable, ineffable corruption of our whole nature, and all its powers,' which is implanted in the intellect, heart, and will; man is wholly evil. Actual sin is not distinct from original, but is one phase of it, for original sin is an 'actual corrupt cupidity.' Concupiscence is not simply the result of disordered faculties, but a positive evil quality, and is itself sin. The results of this view, as regards the whole condition of the Heathen world, and the gradual preparation of mankind for the Incarnation, on which both Scripture and Fathers so strongly insist, contradict of course alike the witness of history and the instincts of our moral nature. And these consequences are openly proclaimed. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of the Devil, and of his angels. Heathen virtues are scarcely even 'splendid vices.' Melancthon calls them 'shadows of virtues;'

he says, that all men's works and all their endeavours are sins; the constancy of Socrates, the chastity of Xenocrates, the temperance of Zeno, 'are vices'; and with perfect consistency he denounces the study of Aristotle and Plato. Calvin clenches the matter by observing, that from man's corrupted nature comes only what is damnable.*

That Luther and his associates were laudably desirous to exhibit the depths of human sin and divine compassion, and that they failed to appreciate the real drift of their teaching, I am quite ready to believe. But we cannot wonder if the intellect and conscience of mankind, in its recoil from so horrible and repulsive a system, was tempted into the opposite extreme of denying the very existence of original sin. It is obvious what bearing this doctrine must have on that of justification. Man cannot coöperate, for he has no freewill, and no natural faculties for good; the whole work must be something external to himself. And so it is. Terrified by the preaching of a law he is powerless to obey, he listens to and grasps at the merits of Christ, whom he apprehends by faith (that is by a 'fiduciary apprehension,' according to Gerhard), and thus he is justified. His repentance, such as it is, is founded on fear, not on love. Obedience, indeed, and sanctification ought to follow, but justification is distinct from these results, and independent of them. Justification, according to the *Formulary*, is simply acquittal from sin and its eternal penalties 'on account of the righteousness of Christ, which is [not *imparted* but] *imputed* to faith,' and that, while by reason of their corrupt nature men still remain

* Calvin. *Inst.* ii. 3.

sinners; for original sin is not extirpated, but only weakened in the regenerate, being part of their nature, and concupiscence, even when resisted, is itself sin. The justified do so much good and for so long only as the Spirit of God impels them. It is admitted in words, that men may *resist* the Spirit, though they cannot co-operate; but the distinction is unmeaning, for God draws all and only those whom He intends to convert. From this view of original sin and justification the Lutheran view of the Atonement is a logical sequence, and it has been already in part anticipated. That righteousness of Christ, which of mere grace is imputed to the believer, is described in the *Formulary*, as 'the *obedience*, Passion, and resurrection of Christ, whereby He satisfied the law for us, and expiated our sins.' On account of this whole obedience in act and suffering, and through faith *(fiducia)*, God remits our sins, accounts us *(reputat)* just, and rewards us with eternal life. For this the Incarnation of Christ was required, because His divinity alone could not discharge the office of Mediator, nor could humanity alone satisfy the eternal and immutable justice of God. The absolute necessity of an infinite satisfaction for an infinite debt was borrowed from St. Anselm's system, but in many points the Lutherans both exceeded and changed it. They derived from Catholic tradition the infinite value of the Redeemer's acts through the *communicatio idiomatum*,* and the value of His obedience

* There was, however, a certain difference here. Catholic theology teaches that our Lord is Mediator, as the God-man, but by virtue of acts done in His human nature only; the Lutherans made Him Mediator by virtue of both natures; while Stancarus said He was Mediator only as Man, a view which Bellarmine justly censured as Nestorian. Cf. Pet. *De Incarn.* xii. 3, 4. See Bellarm. *Disp.* tom. i. *De Christo*, v. 1.

as well as His death; but this last idea received in their hands, as we have seen, a startling but very characteristic development. The obedience of Christ was the *substitute* for ours. According to Chemnitz (one of the compilers of the Formulary so often quoted), God could not and would not pardon us without the intervention of some real righteousness; but this it is impossible, on Lutheran principles, for man himself to offer, and therefore 'the law is transferred to the Mediator.'* Quenstedt is even more explicit, when he says, that Christ made satisfaction for sinners in two ways, by fulfilling the law in their place, and by enduring the curse and penalty of the law. It was not, as had often been taught before, that His obedience was an acceptable sacrifice to God, and gave its meaning and efficacy to His death, but that it was accepted by Him *instead of ours*, which, with a nature so hopelessly corrupted, we could never pay ourselves. His death was now, moreover, for the first time viewed as a vicarious punishment, inflicted by God on Him instead of on us. He was punished and accursed of God, in our place. Quenstedt maintains against the Schoolmen, that for God to pardon us without satisfaction is against His nature, His veracity, His sanctity, and His justice; yet He explains, that 'by a certain kind of relaxation of the law,' another *person* is substituted for the debtor; or, in other words, [though it is matter of indispensable justice to punish the sin, it is immaterial whether or not the punishment be endured by the sinner.†] It was but the natural and logical inference from this

* Facta igitur est translatio legis in Mediatorem. Clem. *Loci Theolog.* ii. 313. Cf. Thomasius *Dogmat. de Obed. Christi Activa Hist.*, Erlang. 1846.

† Quenstedt *Theol. Didact. Polem.* (Wittemberg, 1669), pp. 327, 351, 354.

strange notion of vicarious substituted punishment, that Christ endured in His Passion the pains of Hell; and this blasphemous corollary is distinctly put forward by Quenstedt, Gerhard, and Calvin, as a necessary part of the idea of satisfaction. Well might Bellarmine call it a new and unheard-of heresy!* It is not too much to say, that the Lutheran view of the Atonement, with whatever occasional similarities of language, is a complete innovation on that previously held in all its essential points, and that in a sense directly calculated to discredit the whole doctrine in the eye both of reason and religion.†

Calvin, who in some points was greatly Luther's inferior, was his superior in learning and in clearness of mind; and, accordingly, the system he founded has for the most part a rigid logical coherence in which the Lutheran is strikingly deficient. We have seen that absolute predestination was really involved in Luther's denial of freewill, but he shrunk from pressing this inference, and his followers expressly repudiated it; nor is it ever fair to make a writer responsible even for a logical inference from his principles, which he disclaims. Calvin, however, with more consistency

* Frank, a modern Lutheran divine, in a tract, *De Satisfact. Christi* (Erlangen, 1859), argues against this inference. But cf. Quenst. ut supr. p. 354, Gerhard *Loci Theol.* xvii. 2, 54. Calvin. *Inst. Rel. Chr.* ii. 16, 10. Bellarm. *De Christo*, iv. 8.

† It does not fall within the province of this Inquiry to compare Luther's doctrine with St. Paul's, on which it was professedly founded. Some striking points of contrast between the Apostle's and the Reformer's way of looking at the matter will be found in the Dissertation 'On Righteousness by Faith,' in Jowett's *Epistles of St. Paul* (London, Murray, 1855), vol. ii. pp. 446, 447. I may be pardoned for adding, that the author seems to me to have somewhat misconceived the Catholic doctrine of justification, which he, rather oddly, 'sums up in the formula of justification by works.' See also Newman's *Lectures on Justification*, pp. 386, 387.

asserted the irresistible efficacy of grace, and the absolute predestination of the elect, with its inevitable correlative, the absolute reprobation of all who are not elect. From this it follows, even if denied in words, that God is the Author of sin. Calvin expressly maintains, that man commits sin 'by the just impulse of God,' and that the Fall was not simply foreseen, but predestined by Him. Beza adds, that He creates certain men in order that they may be the instruments of sin, and Zwingle defends this doctrine on the ground that, as the law is not made for the just, God is above law, and therefore breaks none in causing men or angels to transgress, as when He was the Author of David's adultery.* The object and justification of this predestining of evil is, that He may manifest His mercy in the gratuitous salvation of the elect, His justice in the damnation of the reprobate. But the wilfulness of Adam's sin is maintained, as in the Lutheran system, by the distinction (which in this case is certainly without a difference), between necessity and coäction. Calvin, however, approaches more nearly than Luther to Catholic language, if not to Catholic belief, about original sin. The Divine image in man, though grievously deformed, was not utterly destroyed by sin; some sparks of religious knowledge survived among the Heathen, but then this is perversely said to be allowed, in order that they might not have the excuse of ignorance, and might be condemned out of their own mouth! The will had a certain, though very subordinate, part in the work of regeneration, and the beginnings of repentance were

* Calvin *Inst.* iv. 18, 2, iii. 24, 3. Beza *Aphor.* 22. *Absters. Calumn. Hesh. contr. Calvin.* Zwingl. *de Prov.* 5.

due rather to the preaching of the Gospel than the terrors of the law. In this point, again, Calvin's teaching is an improvement on that of the earlier Reformer. Both kinds of conversion find their prototype in Scripture, but the comparison is not in favour of the Lutheran view. There are two forms that hover in an agony of repentance round the closing scenes of the Redeemer's earthly ministry; one represents the remorse of terror, the other the contrition of love. Both repented, but both were not forgiven. Ere the blood of Judas was dry on the field of Aceldama, the soul of the pardoned robber was sunflushed with the brightness of the uncreated Vision, and sphered within the emerald of the rainbow that circles the everlasting throne.

If we except his predestinarian doctrine, that Christ died only for the elect, and the subjective assurance of salvation on which He insists more consistently than Luther, Calvin's language on the Atonement comes much nearer on the whole than Luther's to that of Catholic theology. The value of Christ's death is derived, with St. Bernard, from its voluntary character. The new ideas of a substituted obedience and punishment are, however, retained in their fulness, and Calvin seems to regard the condemnation and execution of Christ by a regular legal tribunal essential for this end. He expressly asserts, that our obligation of punishment and the curse of sin was *transferred* to the Son of God, and does not, as we have already seen, shrink from the terrible consequence of this view, that He suffered in His descent into Hell the actual torments of the damned.* On the other hand, Calvin denies

* Calvin *Inst.* i. 15, 4; 12, 18; ii. 3, 6; 16, 5. Hæc nostra absolutio est

the absolute necessity of the Incarnation, but regards it as the best method for restoring fallen man, and even maintains, that if we had never fallen, the mediation of the God-man would have been needed to bring us into intimate communion with God, and make us His children. He, moreover, in his treatise on the Sacraments, ascribes a life-giving power to the flesh of Christ, not only as having suffered for us once, but as still infusing life, derived from the fountain of Godhead, into those who are engrafted in His mystical body. This is said partly in connection with the Eucharist, on which Calvin held a much higher belief than Zwingle's. And he even admits, in one passage, in replying to Osiander, who taught a higher doctrine than his own, that 'we participate in the righteousness of Christ, not by an external imputation, but because we put on Christ, and are inserted into His body, and He has vouchsafed to make us one with Himself.'* So far, then, Calvin's system is a reaction in the Catholic direction. With his distinctive theory of absolute predestination we are not further concerned here. It may suffice to observe, that in not shrinking from the full statement of what it implies, he shows more consistency, let me add more reverence also, than do those who put forward one side of the doctrine, while seeking through some paltry trick of language to veil its naked deformity by concealing the other. But this is all that can be said for him. The more thoroughly the dogma itself is realized, the more

quod in caput Filii Dei translatus est reatus qui nos tenebat pœnæ obnoxios.... Peccati vim abolebat Pater, *cum in Christi carnem translata est ejus maledictio.* Ib. ii. 16, 6, 7. Cf. ii. 16, 10.

* Ib. ii. 12, 1; iii. 11, 10. *Defens. Orth. Doct. de Sacram.* Opp. t. viii. p. 658.

clearly will it be seen to be subversive of the first principles of morality, and therefore of theism.

A writer, whose name has just been mentioned, Osiander, deserves a passing notice here. Though himself a professed Lutheran, and not the founder of any new system or sect, he was one of the first to protest against Luther's characteristic tenet, that justification means, not 'really and truly to make just, but only to account and pronounce a man just,' which he calls a forensic and sophistical theory, contrary to Scripture and verging on blasphemy. For this the strict Lutherans accused him of trampling under foot the Passion and death and precious blood of Christ. He says expressly, that God justifies by *imparting* to us His righteousness.* After making due allowance for some confusion, both of language and thought, it seems most probable that he meant by the substantial indwelling of Christ's divine nature something different from the Catholic doctrine, as being a righteousness imputed and external to us (though in a different sense to Luther's) not an actual renewal of our nature, making us righteous. Still his protest against the Lutheran error of confounding justification with redemption, and its antinomian results, is important. In a separate treatise, specially devoted to the inquiry, whether the Son of God would have been incarnated, if there had been no sin, he adopts and defends at length, on Scriptural grounds, the Scotist opinion, and insists that the predestined Humanity of Christ was the image on which

* *Conf.* Andr. Osiandri. Regiomonte, Prussiæ, 1551, pp. 42, 189. *Theses de Justif.* 120. There is some difference between Döllinger *(Reformation)* and Möhler in their way of understanding him.

ours was formed.* Another Lutheran divine, Karg of Ansbach, about ten years later, protested against the doctrine of vicarious obedience to the law, but afterwards retracted. At the close of the century, John Piscator elaborately discussed and condemned the notion, making justification consist simply in the remission of sin for the sake of Christ's sufferings, after which the imperfect obedience of the regenerate is accepted, and its imperfections condoned through the blood of Christ, as long as it is sincere. His views, however, were vehemently opposed among the Reformed, and the tenet he rejected found a place in the *Formula Consensus Helvetica* of 1675.†

The treatise of Grotius on the Satisfaction of Christ, written early in the seventeenth century against Socinus, deserves a more extended notice, both from the author's high reputation, and from his having struck out a theory of his own on the subject. It will be convenient, therefore, to reserve it for separate examination at the end of the chapter. Meanwhile we may glance at the teaching of the principal sects which branched off from the original Lutheran or Calvinistic stock, so far as it bears on the Atonement; and as their systems were partly shaped by historical circumstances, it will be best to take them in chronological order.

The earliest protest against the new doctrine of justification came from the Anabaptists, who insisted on the necessity of good works; and this, as Justus Menius truly enough observed, in a Refutation published

* *An Filius Dei fuerit incarnandus si peccatum non introivisset in mundum?* Monteregio, Prussiæ, 1550.

† John Piscat. *Thes. Theol.* Herborn. 1618.

with a preface by Luther, is inconsistent with the doctrine that faith alone saves. It was only, however, in their second stage, as 'Mennonites,' that the community can be said to have had any definite creed.* In a Confession, drawn up in 1580, original sin and justification are described in language substantially accordant with that of the Council of Trent; free-will is expressly affirmed to have survived the Fall, and justification is ascribed to the 'effusion or infusion' of real righteousness through Christ by the coöperation of the Holy Ghost, while justifying faith is said to be that which works by charity, the *fides formata* of Catholic, as opposed to the *fides informis* of Lutheran theology.

The next great movement among the Reformed was a still more direct and vehement recoil from received opinions, confounding in an indiscriminate hatred the original Christian dogma with the newer glosses which had been put upon it. If Luther maintained, in his *Commentary on the Galatians*, that Christ only accidentally discharged the office of a Teacher and Lawgiver, that the blindness of Papists alone had fashioned out of the Gospel 'a law of love,' and that so far from coming to authenticate the moral law the Saviour came to abolish it, Socinus would hardly admit any object of the Incarnation but that of instruction and example; if Luther's ubiquitarian theory absorbed the Humanity in the Divinity of Christ, Socinus rejected His Divinity altogether; if original sin was interpreted by the Re-

* So called from Menno Simonis, a Catholic Priest of Friesland, who joined the sect in 1536. I need scarcely say, that they must not be confounded with the English 'Baptists,' who came into existence as a distinct community in 1633.

formed in a sense which outraged alike the verdict of history and of common sense, its very existence was with equal disregard to facts, denied by their new opponents. No place was allowed to the human will in the Lutheran scheme of justification, therefore no room is left for Divine grace in the Socinian; the Wittemberg theologians could scarcely endure the very name of reason, and their Italian assailants were almost as intolerant of faith. It has already been remarked, that their conception of Christ's Mediatorial office was necessarily moulded on their humanitarian conception of His Person, and falls therefore beyond the scope of this treatise. That they approximated more closely than their predecessors among the Reformed to some details of Catholic belief is true, but their denial of a false supernaturalism was, in fact, ultimately based on a negation of the whole principle, though it of course took time for the seminal ideas of the system to attain full development.

Very different in character was the almost simultaneous revolt against Calvinistic orthodoxy, named from Arminius, a theological Professor at Leyden, who died in 1609. On the whole question of justification, Arminianism was really though not professedly little else than a simple recurrence to Catholic doctrine. Efficacious grace was said to be determined by its voluntary acceptance, not by its intrinsic nature, and the notion of irresistible grace, however explained, was absolutely rejected. But the Arminians taught, almost in the very language of the Council of Trent, that Divine grace must prevent, accompany, and complete every good work.* The views of Grotius, the chief orna-

* See the *Confessio sive Declaratio Pastorum.* Herdervici, 1622-4. It is an

ment of their body, will be examined presently. Two other writers may be noticed here, Curcellæus, and Limborch.* Both agree in insisting chiefly on the death of Christ as a sacrifice, which is a different idea from the payment of a debt; they deny, that Christ in any sense endured, as the Lutherans taught, eternal death and the wrath of God. If He had strictly and fully suffered the punishment of our sins, our pardon would be matter not of mercy but of justice; Curcellæus adds, that, if His satisfaction, righteousness, and sanctity are *imputed* to us, there is no further ground for our observing the moral law, nor can God justly demand either faith or obedience from us. The efficacy of the sacrifice offered for the sins of all mankind is ascribed by Limborch to the will of God in freely accepting it for that end, and to the dignity of the Person who offered it. The imputation of His righteousness can in no other sense be true than that God, for His sake, is pleased to accept our imperfect obedience as though it were perfect, for He cannot see us other than we really are. The Lutheran antithesis of faith and works is unmeaning; both alike are in one sense our own; both, in another, are the gift of God. The object of faith is not simply the Atonement, but the whole Person and office of Christ, Prophet, Priest, and King. There is a double protest in these writers against the extravagances of Reformed doctrine, and the Socinian negations to which they had given birth.

The next system calling for notice here is that of

indication of their theological tendencies, that Grotius at the time of his death had it in contemplation to become a Catholic.

* Curcell. *Inst. Rel. Christ.* Amsterdam, 1675. Limborch *Theol. Christ.* Amsterdam, 1730.

the Quakers, founded in this country about the middle of the seventeenth century, by George Fox. Robert Barclay is their great theologian.* This scheme of doctrine is directly opposed to historical Christianity, but unlike most of the Protestant Confessions, is remarkable for its internal coherence. We may regard it as the natural term in a series of mystical developments, provoked by the exoteric and unspiritual nature of the Lutheran scheme of justification, which began with Schwenkfeld and Wiegel, and found a more distinct utterance in the writings of Jacob Böhme. While discarding all technical terminology not sanctioned by the language of Scripture, the Quakers taught, that a 'seed of sin' was transmitted from Adam to all his posterity, though only imputed to those who have actually sinned. The remedy is to be sought in the 'inward light' or grace emanating from Christ, the Light that lightens every man, and this is offered to all but forced on none; for Calvin's doctrine of predestination is declared to be most injurious to God, and to make Him the Author of sin. This 'objective revelation,' whereby God speaks to every man, does not supersede Scripture, but is superior to it, and constitutes the primary source of knowledge and rule of faith. The 'inward light' is also the source of regeneration; and here the Quakers, in fact, touch on the confines of Catholic doctrine. The Lutheran denial of the necessity of good works is explicitly condemned, justification is described as the formation of Christ in us, producing righteousness and holiness, and this is its formal cause. The 'merit' of good works is vindi-

* Rob. Barclay *Theologiæ vere Christianæ Apologia*. Lond. 1729.

cated, and the fulfilment of the moral law insisted upon. Justification and sanctification are practically identified, as in the Catholic system. And, although, as time went on, a Docetic tendency to ignore or depreciate the historical manifestation of Christ not unnaturally developed itself in their teaching, Barclay distinctly ascribes justification to 'the sacrifice and propitiation of Jesus Christ.' But their extreme dislike of all theological dogma and repudiation of sacraments combined with other elements of the system to induce a disparagement, leading ultimately into a denial, of objective Christianity altogether.

The last, and in some respects most remarkable, of these organized protests against the principles of the original Reformers was inaugurated in the eighteenth century, by Emanuel Swedenborg, the son of a Swedish bishop, whose profound hostility to the Protestant notion of justification, as subversive of morality and most pernicious to all Christian life, may be said to have given its distinctive character and aim to the peculiar system of belief he founded, which is still professed by some few of our own countrymen.* This is not the place to enter on a general examination of his theology, but I may observe that in its ulterior developments it has exploded almost every distinctive tenet of the Christian faith.† A prophet who claimed to derive his message by direct revelation and visions from on high—and of Swedenborg's sincerity there

* *True Christian Religion, containing the Universal Theology of the New Church.* By E. Swedenborg. London, 1819.

† An Expository work by a Mr. Noble was lent me some years ago by a member of the sect, in which I found every article of the Apostles' Creed, except the first, directly or indirectly denied. My informant told me there were three Swedenborgian congregations in London.

cannot be a shadow of reasonable doubt—was not likely to be careful about conforming its contents to the traditional beliefs of Christendom, least of all when the first impetus to his supposed inspirations arose from internal revulsion against the Creed in which he had been brought up. His vision of the various states of Purgatorial or more hopeless suffering, in which the principal Reformers were expiating their erroneous teaching on predestination or justification by faith alone, indicates the ruling idea which shaped his whole theology.* Like Socinus, he had a laudable desire to pull up the tares, and even more completely than Socinus he succeeded in rooting up wheat and tares together. Thinking, oddly enough, that the Lutheran notion of faith apart from morality was grounded upon the doctrine of the Trinity, he replaced it by one not materially differing from Sabellianism. Perceiving again, and rightly, that the new theory of justification introduced by the Reformers was based on their peculiar estimate of original sin, he denied the Fall of man altogether. A new motive was found for the Incarnation in the rebellion of the apostate Angels, and redemption consisted in 'reducing the Hells into subjection,' and thus bestowing renewal on the earthly Church. While, however, Swedenborg attributes no special efficacy to the *death* of Christ, he insists on the Incarnation as the proper and only means of bringing

* Luther was in a more hopeful state than others, as having originally belonged to a Church which exalts charity above faith, and never having been able altogether to divest himself of his early creed. Recollections of classical mythology seem to have exercised some influence over Swedenborg, who was a man of wide and varied information. Thus *e.g.* Melancthon was constantly employed in writing the words, 'Faith alone saves,' which were as constantly erased by an unseen hand.

men into communion with the Deity, using on this point language very like that of Cardinal Cusa and other Catholic divines. Hence his view of justification is also very like the Catholic. It is represented as identical with sanctification, and as a renewal of the whole inner man. But he confounds the belief in the meritorious sacrifice of Christ with the Lutheran doctrine of imputation, which was fastened on it, and maintains, that both alike came in with the Nicene definition of the Trinity, whereas the former, as we have seen, existed from the first, and the latter was scarcely heard of before the sixteenth century. In Swedenborg the recoil from a dry and technical theory of satisfaction reaches its culminating point; and the wide acceptance, for a time, of his fanatical claim to be the inspired restorer of primitive Christianity proves how deep a wound had been inflicted by some of its modern exponents on the reason and conscience of mankind.

I reserved for separate notice the treatise of Grotius on Satisfaction,* and proceed now to redeem my pledge. He was, as we have seen, an Arminian, and with strong Catholic leanings, but he must not of course be taken as a safe interpreter of Catholic belief, nor must we be blinded by his zeal for Trinitarian orthodoxy to the very questionable nature of his theory of the Atonement, and of the arguments by which he supports it. His book was answered by the Socinian Crellius (the writer against whom Petavius' third book on the Trinity is directed), and defended at length in a work

* *Defensio Fid. Cathol. de Satisfactione Christi*, 1617 (Hug. Grot. Opp. Theol. iv. Basileæ, 1732).

called the *Triumph of the Cross* by Essenius, who reproduces his conclusions, and expands with perverse ingenuity the most objectionable parts of his reasoning.* Before making any comments, it will be convenient to give a brief analysis of Grotius' treatise, which is written with all the perspicuity and subtilty of a legal mind, and displays, as might be expected from its authorship, extensive research, both in sacred and secular literature.

Grotius begins by laying down as the 'Catholic opinion,' that God wishing to benefit mankind, but being hindered by their sins, which deserved punishment, determined that Christ, by willingly enduring the bitterest torments and a bloody death, should pay the penalty for our sins, in order that *without prejudice to the exhibition of divine justice (salvâ divinæ justitiæ demonstratione)*, we might through faith be delivered from the penalty of eternal death. The reader will take note, that the words I have italicized contain the gist of the whole theory. In the first chapter, adopting the Aristotelian division of causes, the author lays down as the *efficient* cause of satisfaction, first God the Father who gave His Son, and secondly Christ who gave Himself for us. The *material* cause is Christ's sufferings, both of soul and body, especially of soul, preceding death, and still more His death itself. The *formal* cause is the payment of the penalty for our sins, which are expressly said to be 'imputed' to Christ; the prophecy of Isaiah is translated and explained, in accordance with the Hebrew text, the '*chastisement*' of our peace is upon Him, not the 'discipline,' as the

* *Triumphus Crucis, sive Fides Cathol. de Satisfact. Christi.* Amstelod. 1749.

Fathers had taken it;* and it is insisted, also against patristic tradition, that St. Paul's words (Gal. iii. 13) mean that He was accursed *of God*. God punished, and Christ endured the punishment. The *final* cause is, on God's side, the exhibition of divine justice; on ours, the remission of sin, that is of punishment; and by justice is not to be understood the righteousness or holiness of God, which is imputed to us, but His retributive justice, which is displayed in the punishment of sins. To these four causes Grotius adds as the *motive* cause, on the one hand the love of God and Christ for man, on the other our sins which deserved punishment. The four grounds (or final causes) alleged by Socinus for the death of Christ,—to bear witness to His teaching, to win the right of pardoning us, to show an example of patience and obedience, and to elicit our faith—are not only rejected as inadequate (as they are), but almost, as in the Lutheran theology, excluded altogether. The second chapter is devoted to proving, that God punishes or releases from punishment (which last Scripture calls to justify†), not as the Creditor or the Person offended, but as the Ruler of the world; for the offended party, as such, has no right to demand punishment, but only compensation for the offence. Punishment belongs to the Ruler for the good of the community, not for his own sake, even when the crime is against himself, or for that of the person injured. The third chapter explains, that God's act in pardoning us is not an abrogation or interpretation of the Divine law (Gen. ii. 17), but a relaxation or

* 'Castigatio pacis nostræ imponitur Ei.' The Septuagint reads παιδεία, Vulgate, disciplina. Cf. supr. ch. ii.

† The reader will observe the Lutheran idea again cropping out.

dispensation of it, as regards certain persons, namely, believers. All positive law is, in its own nature, dispensable, nor are penal laws an exception; but they should not be dispensed without grave cause, or the authority of law generally would be impaired. A two-fold cause existed here, for without relaxation of the law of death both man's worship of God and the evidence of God's mercy to man would have utterly perished. In the fourth chapter the question is asked, whether Christ's being punished for our sins was unjust? It cannot be unjust in itself for God to visit His most innocent Son with the bitterest torments and death, because He did so. Neither is it unjust in itself, that the innocent should be punished for the guilty, of which there are abundant examples in nature, in history, and in human law, as when children suffer for their parents', subjects for their rulers' sin.* It is essential to justice, that punishment should be inflicted on sin, but not that it should fall on the sinner, at least so long as there is some natural or moral connection between the culprit and the victim, as between father and son, sovereign and people, surety and client. The fifth chapter, which is the most important of all for understanding Grotius' view, inquires, whether there was sufficient cause for God to punish Christ, or, in other words, how it could benefit us? For God's wishing to pardon us, the cause was His own goodness; the question is about the *method*. This is expressly shown, by the testimony of several Fathers, not to have been necessary. Other ways of delivering man were possible, but this was the most convenient, because the

* Essenius has an elaborate chapter expanding this argument in detail.

authority of the moral law and the order of things would have been endangered, had God let off the sinner without some *conspicuous example* of the real deserts of sin. That the example does not take place in the person of the sinner is immaterial. According to jurists, the most perfect method of relaxing a law is where there is some compensation or commutation, and this may be a commutation not only of punishment, but of persons punished. Thereby also God showed His special love toward us, inasmuch as it was not a matter of indifference to Him (*ἀδιάφορον*) to punish or not to punish sin. It is shown in the sixth chapter, that God intended to punish Christ, for He had never granted or promised pardon on any other condition. He therefore made Christ sin, and a curse. The nature of satisfaction is then explained, as being not an actual payment (for that *ipso facto* releases the debtor from all further obligation), but a payment requiring a voluntary intervention on the ruler's part (*solutio recusabilis*), to relax the law and remit the penalty, because it is not a payment of the very thing owed—which in this case was our eternal death—but of something else. The ruler does not receive anything, for there is nothing to receive, but he agrees on the payment of a certain penal satisfaction to remit all punishment for the future. The last four chapters of the treatise are occupied with the death of Christ, considered as a reconciliation or propitiation, a redemption, a substitution, and an expiation. It not only reconciles us to God but God to us (which is stated to be the same thing), by turning away His wrath from us. It is a redemption, because our release from eternal punishment was purchased by it; and even texts

which expressly speak of our release from iniquity (as Tit. ii. 14, 1 Pet. i. 18), are pressed into the writer's service in this sense, while he goes out of his way to deny that they mean, what they certainly say, that we are redeemed from the bondage of *sin*. It is further asserted, that the punishment or death of Christ was substituted for ours. It is an expiation, as being an antecedent act required on God's part for the remission of punishment.

Such, then, is Grotius' 'Defence of the Catholic Faith,' or rather of his own, on the Atonement. In his zeal against Socinianism, he has reproduced some of the worst features of the Lutheran and Calvinistic systems, which helped to create it. The idea of justification, as a mere remission of punishment, the shocking notion of a literal imputation of our sins to Christ, with its immoral correlative of an imputation of His holiness to us, reappears at least in words.* But in its main characteristics Grotius' theory is his own, as are also the arguments by which he supports it. And of these something must now be said.

The first point to strike a reader of the treatise is its thoroughly abstract and juristic manner of treating the question. Such a view could only have occurred to a mind habitually versed in the technicalities of legal hair-splitting. It is rather the device of a special pleader, who has taken a brief for the Atonement, than the judgment of a theologian. Yet even so, and with the additional charm of controversial ingenuity, one can scarcely conceive its having satisfied so clear and capacious an intellect. Were it simply suggested as a fiction of the law, we might reply with the legal

* This view is however expressly disclaimed by Grotius in his later writings.

maxim, *Summum jus summa injuria.* But, if it means anything more, what shall we say? The Anselmic notion, that pardon was impossible without the payment of an infinite equivalent for an infinite debt, however untenable, is at least so far intelligible and consistent. It supplies an adequate motive for the Incarnation and the Cross. But Grotius denies that an equivalent was either required or paid. His rationale of the death of Christ is one which shocks both our reason and our religious instinct. It was not fitting that God should let us off, so to speak, without some terrible example of His righteous indignation against all manner of iniquity; but whether or not the punishment took effect on the sinner was indifferent, so long as it was clearly understood to be the punishment of sin. The spectacle on Calvary was a grand dramatic exhibition of God's retributive justice, and having thus publicly vindicated the authority of His law, He consented to remit all further penalties of disobedience. Yet surely, if a conspicuous example were needed to deter men from sin for the future—and it could have no other object—not only was there no ground for selecting an innocent Victim, but it was absolutely essential that punishment should fall on the guilty; the greater the criminal the more forcibly would the lesson be conveyed. Least of all was the Incarnation of a divine Person requisite, that the Father might teach us the heinousness of our iniquities by visiting their merited chastisement on His sinless Son;* the Socinian account of that mystery would

* This weakness of the theory was pointed out by later writers who attacked it, among the Lutherans, as Buddæus (*Instit. Theol.* 1725). Pfaff (*Examen lib. Grot. de Satis.* 1753), and the jurist Ulrich Huber quoted by Buddæus.

fully satisfy all the requirements of the case. It is true, indeed, that the Crucifixion of Jesus revealed, as nothing else could reveal it, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, but that is quite another thing from saying, with Grotius, that He was punished and accursed for our warning by the vindictive justice of God. The only attempt made to account for His being chosen as the Victim is in the passing remark (chap. v.), that He had a special aptitude, from the dignity of His Person and His intimate union with us, to be made a conspicuous example; surely the more perfect His innocence the more conspicuous, on this view, the example of injustice. I pass over the purely exoteric character of the whole transaction which reduces the Incarnation and the Passion to a thrilling scene in the drama of the world's history, and recognizes no real communion between the Second Adam and the members of His body, from His flesh and from His bones, no other link between His death and their redemption, than that the condemned criminal is bidden to gaze on the punishment of the Just as the condition of being spared his own. But if the conclusion is startling, the line of argument it is supported by is more startling still. In this world the innocent often suffer for the guilty, children bear the burden of their fathers', subjects of their rulers' sin; nay, it frequently happens, in the execution of justice, that good and bad are punished together, or the good instead of the bad; therefore, while the law must visit crime, it need not touch the criminal! But does not Christian instinct, to say nothing of Scripture, teach us, that these inequalities of earth will be rectified by unerring wisdom in the world beyond the grave? or, rather, are not those very in-

equalities a confirmation of our belief in the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? Such seeming difficulties, which from the days of Job have tortured the philosopher, and sometimes disquieted the Saint, run up at last into the one insoluble riddle of all metaphysics and all theology, the origin of evil. When once the existence of evil is accepted as a fact, though its original permission cannot be explained, they cease to be difficulties, and are felt to be a temporary and incidental interruption of the perfect order of the universe, introduced by sin. They have also their bearings on the sacrifice of Christ, as has been observed in a former chapter. But it is quite a different matter when the experience of human history, *delirant reges plectuntur Achivi*, is converted into a principle of divine governance, and it is gravely inferred, that, because God for wise ends permits the afflictions of the righteous, He *punishes* them for others' sins.* To the bitter cry of humanity, 'What hope of answer or redress?' we have hitherto been content to reply, 'Behind the veil, behind the veil.' But to argue from the manifold chastisements entailed by the wickedness or follies of parents on coming generations, or of sovereigns on a whole people, or again from the necessary or culpable imperfections of human law, or the blindness or prejudice or corruption of those who administer it, as though such things were not an abnormal exception tolerated for a while by God, but the rule of His providence and measure of His attributes,

* It is one thing to say, with Butler (*Analogy*, pt. ii. ch. 5), that vicarious sufferings in this world are an answer to objections drawn from the fact of the innocent victim suffering for the guilty (cf supr. ch. 1); quite another to say that God *judicially punishes* the innocent for the guilty, which is Grotius's argument.

is to cut away the roots of human morality, and of trust in a higher than human Justice. It is to say in effect, that, because evil exists, it must be eternal, and to make God, if not its Author, its Accomplice. Of all the strange notions that at various times have darkened the revelation of Calvary, it would be hard perhaps to find any more strange than this, which eliminates from the greatest fact in history all real significance, while it dares to interpose between man and God a fiction of misdirected vengeance. Grotius appends to his treatise a long list of extracts from the Fathers, which certainly, whatever else they may contain, do not contain the theory he has invented.

Before we close this chapter, one more writer, of the early part of the eighteenth century, may be mentioned, both as exhibiting the most pronounced antithesis, within the bosom of the Lutheran Church, to the theological system of its founder, and as being the last Lutheran divine of any note who can properly be said to belong to the epoch of the Reformation. Towards the middle of that century, a wholly new movement of religious thought commences with the appearance of the Wolfenbüttel Fragments and other publications of Lessing,* the quasi-rationalistic theology of Semler, and the philosophy of Kant. From thenceforth the contest in Germany is between the assailants and the champions of the traditional Protestant orthodoxy. The latter for the most part adopt, with modifications, Grotius' manner of explaining the Atonement, as it is done by Michaelis, Seiler, and Storr,

* Lessing maintains (*Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, 75) that the moral law was given by God for the discipline of man, the imperfections of his obedience being condoned in regard of the absolute perfections of the Son.

while the leading writers on the opposite side more or less openly repudiate its historical truth and significance. Into that controversy it would be beyond the scope of this treatise to enter, nor could it be done to any purpose without a discussion of the principal schools of later German philosophy, as those of Kant, Hegel, and Schelling.* There is no such objection to completing our review of the various phases of Reformation doctrine on the subject with an account of that of John Dippel, the Christian Democritus as he was called, who comes before the commencement of the rationalistic period, and, while standing on the professed ground of Lutheran orthodoxy, represents the widest departure from the original standard of Lutheran belief.†

The Redeemer, he observes, is not only a High-priest, to reconcile His people through prayer and sacrifice; He is also a Prophet, to instruct the fallen in the way of righteousness, and a King, to break the chains of the realms of darkness, and set free the creature from the power of sin. His work of mediation, as the Second Adam, is not complete till all this is accomplished in the soul of the redeemed. God is Love, and has ever loved us; it is we who need to be reconciled to Him, not He to us. And this reconciliation cannot be effected by a mere external fiction of imputed righteousness, but only through the real implanting of a righteous principle within us by the life-giving Spirit, whom Christ bestows, and by whose aid

* For some account of the successive Rationalist schools of German theology, the reader may be referred to Farrar's Bampton Lectures *On the History of Free Thought*, vi. and vii. with the Notes.

† *Eröffneter Weg zum Frieden.* Amsterdam, 1706. *Vera Demonstratio Evangelica*, 1729.

we overcome sin. Punishment is either the natural consequence of sin, or is inflicted by God for the discipline and correction of the sinner, and in either case is a dispensation of His love. Spiritual death can as little be separated from sin, as warmth from fire, for sin is itself a conversion to the creature and a turning away from our chief Good. Hell, therefore, is no arbitrary creation of God, but the inevitable result of sin; sin means separation from God, and that separation is spiritual death. From this Christ sets us free, not by a mere judicial acquittal, but by releasing us from the power of sin. From corrective chastisement He has not released us, but has taught us how to bear it; for by such chastisements alone, with the assistance of indwelling grace, can the affections of the great multitude of men be withdrawn from earthly things and from their inherent concupiscence. We are therefore placed under a discipline of love for our renewal and sanctification. Neither Heathen, nor even Jewish, sacrifices are properly types of the Sacrifice of Christ, nor were they so designed by God, though the latter are so explained 'by accommodation,' in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Lastly, Dippel rejects as blasphemous the Lutheran notion, that Christ endured the actual curse and punishment of God, which must in fact imply that He shared the actual sin.

It is obvious how far even professed Lutherans had by this time drifted from their master's teaching, for the most part in a reactionary direction, towards the creed it was intended to supplant.

It is not necessary to introduce here any lengthened notice of English divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, partly as being better known, partly

because they have not originated any special theory on the Atonement itself, while on its application to us, or the doctrine of Justification, their opinions incline more or less, according to individual bias, in a Catholic or Lutheran direction. Nor do the more eminent of them *insist* on any particular view of justification, with the exception of Hooker, who, in his Sermon on the subject, not only lays down an extreme doctrine of imputation, but implies that to deny it is to 'pervert the truth of Christ,' and 'gainsay the very ground of apostolic faith;' yet his opinion stops considerably short of Luther's, and in the very same discourse he says that Lutheran teaching is 'damnable,' and by implication 'overthows the very foundation of faith.' It may be added that the Sermon on Justification was among his earlier writings, and was not published during his lifetime. The Atonement is scarcely touched upon in the famous exposition of the patristic doctrine of the Incarnation in the fifth book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which however has the following passage on the question of its necessity. "The world's salvation was without the Incarnation of the Son of God a thing impossible, *not simply impossible*, but impossible it being presupposed that the will of God was no otherwise to have it saved than by the death of His own Son." So also Pearson, in expounding the fourth article of the Creed (which he does in much the same manner as the Tridentine Catechism, though at greater length), contents himself with observing; "Salvation is impossible unto sinners without remission of sin; and remission *in the decree of God* impossible without effusion of blood." Butler, the great ornament of Anglican theology at a later date, while defending, in

the fifth chapter of the *Analogy*, the doctrine of Christ's mediation and Atonement against current infidel objections, expressly disclaims any idea of speculation on the abstract necessity of Atonement, or of attempting to explain the manner of its efficacy. He considers that 'Scripture has left this matter of the satisfaction of Christ mysterious, left somewhat in it unrevealed,' and that accordingly 'all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, at least uncertain.'

The chief classical work on the subject in recent times is that of Archbishop Magee, on the *Scriptural Doctrine of Atonement and Sacrifice*, which, like so many others, is mainly directed against Unitarian objections. He enters at great length into the universality and divine origin of the institution of animal sacrifice, and the belief in its expiatory virtue, tracing it from the time of Abel. But his argument is drawn in great measure, like Butler's, from natural analogies, and, with Butler, while insisting on the *fact* of the Atonement, he disclaims speculations on the reason or manner of its efficacy, viewing it as a means ordained by God, not as the cause of His forgiveness. The notion of the necessity of an infinite Victim for an infinite sin he indignantly repudiates, treating it as an Unitarian misrepresentation. His work, though displaying considerable learning on many detailed points, can hardly be said to throw much new light on the subject as a whole.

NOTE TO CHAP. V.

ON BAXTER'S VIEW OF IMPUTATION.

A CONTROVERSY on imputed righteousness arose in England during the sixteenth century, chiefly among the dissenters, in which Baxter's name is prominent. His matured views, together with a short history of the controversy from the beginning, will be found in his Treatise *On the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to Believers* (London, 1675), with which the reader may compare some extracts from his *Life of Faith* in Newman's *Lect. on Justif.* pp. 427, 428. His teaching on the subject in the Treatise just mentioned differs little, if at all, except in manner of expression, from that of the Fathers and later Catholic divines; and this he repeatedly implies, though feeling bound to insert frequent protests against language used, or said to be used, by 'the Papists,' evidently more from educational misapprehensions than from any real difference of sentiment. Even the 'merit of good works' is expressly admitted, 'according to the law of grace through Christ.' The Lutheran notions of Christ's *vicarious* obedience being imputed to us, and of our sins being imputed to Him, so that He took on Himself the *person* of the sinner, and endured, as such, the wrath and curse of God and the torments of the damned, are explicitly repudiated; and original sin is accordingly explained in a sense widely different from Luther's extravagant theory. On the whole, I conceive that Baxter, prejudices apart, would have found little to quarrel with in the Tridentine doctrine of justification. It need scarcely be observed, that, while his style is somewhat technical and archaic, he is one of the clearest and most learned theological writers in our language. In his scrupulous candour, and Christian courtesy and moderation of tone towards opponents too often conspicuous for the absence of such qualities (in-

cluding those to whom he owed his thirteen years' imprisonment) he reminds us of the great and large-hearted Athanasius, who is a model for controversialists.* After Baxter's death, the controversy was carried on by a Dr. Williams, also a dissenter, who takes the same side, but does not profess to be 'in all things of the same judgment' with him, and is by no means his equal in clearness of statement, or correctness of information.

* The bitterness of his opponents may be inferred from a statement made by Dr. Williams, after his death (*Discourses*, vol. i. p. 431): "There be of them that say publicly, 'Mr. Baxter is in Hell'!"

CHAPTER VI.

LATER CATHOLIC THEOLOGY.

The Atonement did not, as has been before remarked, become a subject of direct controversy at the Reformation, nor has it, except in some few instances in Germany to be noticed presently, been distinctively handled by later Catholic theologians. For the most part they either follow the patristic method, as Thomassin and Petavius, or, more generally, the Scholastic, adopting either the Thomist or Scotist system under various modifications. Among Thomists may be reckoned Suarez, Vasquez, Gregory de Valentia, Dominic à Soto, and Tournely; among Scotists, Medina, De Lugo, Frassen, and Henno. All alike introduce the doctrine as falling under that of the Incarnation. Petavius, out of sixteen books on the Incarnation, devotes one chapter only to the satisfaction and three to the priesthood of Christ. Thomassin gives half of one book to His satisfaction, and the whole of the next to His priesthood, which, however, includes an exposition of the doctrine of the Eucharist. To examine these writers in detail would be to go over again the ground we have already traversed. But one or two specimens may be given of the more scientific

treatment of the subject during the eighteenth century, and, as the Parisian Sorbonne was at that time the great theological school of the Church, they shall be taken from the works of its professors.

Tournely, the last of the great writers mentioned above, was a vigorous, not to say bitter, controversialist. On the doctrines of grace he was vehemently opposed to Thomist opinions, but he adopts the Thomist view of the atonement in its extremest form, treating the question, throughout, like Grotius, in reference to the Socinians.* Indeed he candidly informs us, that out of the many opinions debated among Catholic divines he has chosen that which appeared to him best adapted 'for repressing Socinian impiety.' With the great multitude of theologians, he denies any antecedent necessity for the Incarnation, either in itself, or assuming the creation or the fall of man. But on the hypothesis of the restoration of fallen man, while admitting in words that 'by the extraordinary power of God' we might have been saved without 'condign' satisfaction, he yet insists that by the 'ordinary power of God' this was impossible; and the ordinary power is explained to mean the laws of divine justice, which are part of the divine nature. And, as he also agrees with the Thomists that there could be no condign satisfaction except that of Christ, we may regard him as accepting practically the Anselmic view of an absolute necessity for the Incarnation, assuming the restoration of fallen man. He maintains, with Grotius, that the punishment of Christ was strictly and literally substituted for ours, and that He endured the vindic-

* Honoratus Tournely *Prælect. Theol. de Incarn. Verbi Divini.* Parisiis, 1727.

tive justice of God in our place, though not, as Lutherans inferred, the torments of the damned. It follows of course that it was not a matter of mercy, but of strict justice, on God's part to accept the satisfaction offered for us, and that He could not do otherwise. Under the term satisfaction Tournely comprehends the payment of a debt, the appeasing of divine wrath, and the expiation of the liabilities of sin.

Le Grand, a disciple and continuator of Tournely, follows on the whole his master's teaching, and, like him, directs the argument mainly against the Socinians. But in simplicity of method, moderation of tone, and absence of controversial asperity, his *Treatise on the Incarnation** contrasts very favourably with Tournely's *Prælections*, and in some important points their conclusions are different. Moreover Le Grand is always very careful, which Tournely is not, to distinguish between his own opinions and the doctrine of the Church. He not only rejects any absolute necessity for the Incarnation, in itself or assuming the Fall, but adds that fallen man might have been otherwise restored, though there could not have been any other condign satisfaction, nor could God have otherwise 'expressed His vindictive justice;' but then it was not necessary to express it, for, while it gives Him the *right* to punish sin, it only *binds* Him not to pardon the sinner without true repentance. The Incarnation was therefore, as the Fathers had taught, not the only but the fittest method of redemption. Le Grand accepts the Thomist view of its motive as the most probable; satisfaction he defines, with Tournely, as 'the voluntary rendering of

* *Tractatus de Incarn. Verb. Divini.* Parisiis, 1750.

equivalent honour and reverence out of what is one's own, and not otherwise owed, to compensate an injury done to another;' adding, that all these conditions were fulfilled in the satisfaction of Christ, which was not only equivalent but superabundant, and such as God was bound in strict justice to accept. But he is careful to explain, that all which pertains to the Catholic faith to hold is, that it was such as God could fittingly accept for the sins of men. Le Grand admits pointedly, what Grotius had almost seemed inclined to deny, that the grounds assigned by Socinians for the death of Christ are true and valid, as far as they go, though inadequate, and answers their objection about the innocent suffering for the guilty not altogether satisfactorily, but in a very different manner from the ingenious special pleading of the great jurist. While insisting on the fact, as ascertained from Scripture, that it was not God's will to remit sin without atonement, he confesses that his explanations of it are little more than conjectural, and that there are causes of the mystery which in this life we cannot hope to discover. It is probable that both these writers were largely influenced in their particular way of looking at the question—clearly Tournely was—by the exigencies of the Socinian controversy, as was also the case with some English divines, such as Stillingfleet. Yet any dispute about the office and work of the Redeemer was in fact beside the mark, as against those who rejected His divine nature. The root of the difference lay deeper.

One later specimen shall be adduced, also from a professor of the Sorbonne, of the theological treatment

of the subject.* Robbe, the author of a *Treatise on the Mystery of the Incarnate Word*, after successively repudiating Wicliffe's notion of an absolute *à priori* necessity of the Incarnation, Raymund Lully's of a necessity assuming the Fall, and that of the Calvinists (borrowed from St. Anselm) of a necessity assuming the restoration of fallen man, decides, against Scotus, that it *was* necessary 'for condign satisfaction,' as no other would be equivalent or *ex alias indebitis*. He adds, against the Socinians, that it was a true and proper satisfaction. Nor was it only sufficient, but superabundant. Any act of Christ, or any single drop of His Blood, would have been *sufficient* for our redemption, from the dignity of His Person, but not *efficient* unless He had so designed it. The sacrifice was really offered *ad alterum*, because offered to the whole Trinity. The author further argues, against Vasquez, Medina, and others, that it was *ex propriis* and *ex alias indebitis*, because acts belong to the person, not the nature, of the agent. Under this last head the question is asked, whether the satisfaction of Christ required any agreement on God's part to accept it, or whether He was bound as a matter of justice to do so? The necessity of an agreement is denied by St. Bonaventure, Scotus, and, others (and, as we have seen, by Tournely), but affirmed by Suarez, whose opinion Robbe adopts, considering it clear from Scripture (Heb. x.) that there was in fact such an agreement, and thinking further, that it was requisite, because the offending parties might have been fairly

* *Tractatus de Mysterio Verbi Incarnati*, auctore J. M. Robbe. Parisiis, 1762.

called on to make satisfaction themselves. Christ was our Head by arrangement *(pacto)*, not, like the first Adam, by nature. He satisfied in strict justice, inasmuch as His satisfaction was adequate and more than adequate, but to accept it for us was a matter not of justice, but of mercy.

And now let us give two examples, from the same century, of the hortatory and devotional rather than scientific treatment of the subject, which for that very reason will be in one sense a surer test of the habitual manner of looking at it. They will be found, like the theological treatises of Petavius and Thomassin, to bear out the remark made in an earlier chapter, that, while the scholastic formula of satisfaction was retained as one method of expressing the mystery of atonement, the idea of sacrifice was that most predominant in Catholic teaching and devotion.

My first illustration shall be taken from a *Treatise on the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Jesus Christ*, in four books, by Leonard de Massiot, a French Benedictine of the learned Congregation of St. Maur.* The author begins by tracing out the idea and obligation of sacrifice, as the supreme act of homage to God, and as including, since the introduction of sin into the world, an additional character of reparation; and shows how both the interior and exterior sacrifice are most perfectly realized in Christ. The second book deals with the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, in its unity, perpetuity, and continuation in the Eucharist. The whole mystical Body is offered with Him on the Cross, which is 'the common altar of all mankind.' In the third

* *Traité du Sacerdoce et du Sacrifice de Jésus Christ.* Par L. de Massiot. Poitiers, 1708.

book the effects of His sacrifice are considered, under the classification of satisfaction, merit, overcoming the power of sin and Satan, and confounding pride by humility. The last half of the book is occupied with the treatment of the Eucharist as an abiding memorial of the benefits wrought by Christ, a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, a mystery of unity, a sign of the union of the faithful, and a mystery of faith. The fourth book, which is much the longest, continues in detail the consideration of the priesthood of Christ, as communicated to His Church in the Eucharist. To return to the chapter on satisfaction. The writer relies chiefly on Anselm's argument for the impossibility of man making satisfaction for himself, and on Aquinas for the sufficiency of that wrought by Christ, as giving to God something more pleasing than what He had lost by sin, owing to the charity with which Christ endured the pains of His passion, the excellence of His life, and the dignity of His Person. His voluntary temporal death, it is added, was of far greater value than our eternal death could be. Our personal satisfactions are not superseded by His, but must be united with it.

Not very different is the treatment of the subject by a later author, Plowden, who, though an Englishman, was a resident in France, and, like Massiot, wrote his *Treatise on the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ* in French.* While rejecting the notion of any absolute necessity, he dwells on the congruity of a satisfaction and reparation being made for the disorder caused by sin, either by all men in common, or by some representa-

* *Traité du Sacrifice de Jésus Christ.* Paris, 1778.

tive of the race. He proceeds to discuss the qualities and conditions essential for a mediator, who must not only be able to pardon sin but to infuse holiness. These conditions can only be found united in the God-man. It was fitting, again, that He should accomplish His work by sacrifice, which is the highest of all acts of satisfaction, though any, the least, intercession of His would have been sufficient, from its infinite value. The effects of His sacrifice are three-fold; to reconcile or reunite us with God, to unite us with each other by charity, and to incorporate us into the mystical body, which He offered up with His natural body on the Cross. The work is divided into five parts. The first examines the preannouncement of the great Sacrifice in the written and unwritten law, the Jewish and Heathen rituals. The second exhibits the perfect fulfilment of the sacrificial idea in the life and death of Christ. In the third is considered its perpetuation, for communicating its effects to us, in the mass, considered chiefly as the centre of Christian worship. The fourth part insists on the reproduction of the idea in all members of the mystical body through self-sacrifice and imitation of the virtues of their Head, while the fifth carries on the idea to its final consummation in the offering up of the entire body of the elect reunited with their Head in heaven. Of the three last parts no more need be said here. In the first, the interior sacrifice of the heart, and the outward sacrifice, which is its proper expression, are contrasted and explained, with constant reference to Augustine's *City of God*. The outward expression was needed for men composed of body and soul, and having to live in society, even during the state of in-

nocence; still more after the Fall, when the idea of expiation was added to that of homage, and hence animal sacrifices came into use. Those of the Jewish ritual are examined in detail. In the second part the immense superiority of Christ's sacrifice to all others is dwelt upon. It consists of the oblation of His Body, Soul, and will, that is of His whole Being, and that of His members with it; of His prayers and other acts, and those of His members with them; and of His sufferings and death, and theirs united with His.

It will at once be seen, that with these writers—and they are but a specimen of many more—the dominant idea, as with the Fathers, is that of Sacrifice, which is a more comprehensive one than that of satisfaction only, or the payment of a debt. It includes and exhausts them, but it includes a great deal more. We may further observe that this idea is habitually viewed in connection with its perpetuation in the Eucharist. And this suggests a subject already more than once referred to in the chapters on patristic teaching, and which cannot be wholly passed over in speaking of the doctrine of the Atonement, though a separate volume would be required for its adequate treatment. A few words must suffice here, not to prove but to indicate the inseparable union between the sacrifice of the altar and the sacrifice of the Cross.

On the last night of His earthly ministry, when the shadows of death were closing in upon the chosen few, and the dark designs of the conspirators were even now shaping themselves into act within the walls of the apostate city, Jesus, having loved His own, loved them unto the end. He was about to die. And therefore He gathered His disciples around Him in that

upper room at Jerusalem, for a last farewell. "When the evening was come, He sat down with the Twelve." He had washed their feet; He had addressed to them those words of thrilling import, which run through four chapters in the narrative of the last Evangelist; He had eaten the Paschal supper. And then, as at a marriage feast He had begun His ministry by changing water into wine, so at the feast which closed it He transmuted, by a signal miracle, the shadow to the substance, the figures of the law into the realities of the Atoning Sacrifice. He 'sanctified Himself.' He offered the great Eucharistic intercession (John xvii.) which embraced all future ages, and contained in germ all possible liturgies of Christendom. He rehearsed before the Twelve in mystery that Sacrifice, which on the morrow was to be offered in tears and blood. He took of the pure wheat flour which is given for man's nourishment, and the fruit of the vine which maketh glad his heart, and consecrated them to be for all time the symbols, the vehicle, the transparent veils of that sacred Flesh and that redeeming Blood, which He had assumed in the Conception, and was to offer on the Cross. What He did then His Church was to continue always, till He should return again, for a memorial of Him. As every Christian prayer must be offered in His name, so all Christian worship must be centred in the one great act which perpetuates for ever the 'new rite' of that last Paschal Supper, not in empty sign, but in spirit and in truth. From the rising to the setting sun, wherever His name is known among the Gentiles, He has bidden that pure oblation to be laid continually on His altar. The Incarnation and the Passion are no mere incidents of bygone his-

tory, but a presence of abiding power. The Blood that flowed on Calvary flows indeed no more, but the Lamb slain before the worlds were made is offered still, Himself the Victim, Priest, and Shrine. And through the might of that Atonement, the Sacrifice one and indivisible pleaded on ten thousand altars, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, is the Church's prayer fulfilled; *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.**

I proceed to give some notice of German Catholic divines in the present century, who are now stepping into the place occupied before the French Revolution by the doctors of the Sorbonne. In 1807, Klüpfel and Dobmayer published dogmatic works in Latin.† They agree in regarding the Atonement as a mystery, which we cannot explain on antecedent grounds of reason, and must therefore be content to accept as a revealed fact: *Consultius igitur ducimus rem arguere ex eventu.* The Son of God has made satisfaction, inasmuch as He has done all that was necessary for our eternal welfare, for removing sin and its consequences, and reëstablishing the kingdom of God. In what sense this satisfaction was necessary we cannot know, but we must infer from the event that there are reasons why it was so. Dobmayer adds, that the Atonement must not be regarded as a punishment inflicted on Christ, but as an act done by Him for the benefit of the human race; not as a substitute for our personal service, but as a supplement of our weakness and en-

* See Note at the end of the Chapter, 'On the Connection between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Eucharist.'

† Klüpfel *Instit. Theol. Dogmat.* Wien, 1807. Dobmayer *Systema Theol. Cathol.* Sulsbach, 1807.

couragement to our energy. A more famous name is that of Klee, who wrote thirty years later, in German, on Catholic doctrine.* He understands by the satisfaction of Christ, that through His bodily death He has removed the ground of our spiritual death, and softened *(gemildert)* its consequences, as to intention and efficacy for all, and actually for those who are so united with Him as to be able to appropriate His sufferings. We cannot say, that He has formally endured our punishment, as such, for it is impossible for the innocent to be justly punished; nor materially, for He was not made subject to spiritual death, as neither to ignorance or evil desire. Neither, again, has He in such sense suffered in our place, and by substitution, as that by His satisfaction all our debt and sin is in fact remitted. Bodily death, the sorrows of life, ignorance and concupiscence remain, and we are then first released from our debt, when we have fulfilled all the conditions requisite for partaking of the benefits of the redemption wrought for us. This satisfaction of Christ is in itself superabundant; for, while sin is finite, the acts of the God-man, as proceeding from His Person, not from His finite human nature, are infinite. Another Catholic writer of the same date, Brenner *(Kathol. Dogmat.* p. 36), also protests against the notion of substituted punishment, as hard and unreasonable, and inconsistent with the nature of God. We cannot pass over in silence a still greater name, that of Günther; but with his philosophical system, which is said to be very obscurely expressed, I have no acquaintance, nor indeed would this be the place for

* Klee *Katholische Dogmatik.* Mainz, 1835.

examining it if I had. I shall content myself with giving, as simply as I can, the account of the Atonement contained in his *Theory of the Incarnation*.* We shall have occasion presently to notice the writings of Pabst, who, if he represents the same theological school, is at all events a much clearer and more intelligible exponent of its principles. Günther's system implies, if I understand him rightly, the Scotist idea of the Incarnation, as antecedent to the prevision of the Fall. Its primary object is the infusion of divine life into man, or his regeneration to eternal life. The death of Christ is 'not the moving but the mediating cause' of redemption; or, in other words, God is not gracious to us because Christ died, but Christ died for us because God is gracious. The juristic view of vicarious satisfaction is rejected, on the ground that justice requires the punishment of the guilty, and can least of all be satisfied by the supreme injustice of punishing the innocent instead. That would be a direct contradiction. Some other explanation must therefore be found for the Sacrifice of the death of Christ. God will only forgive sin to those who are willing to be reformed; but for this man needs a practical proclamation of the heinousness of sin, which is given, as in a picture, by the death of Christ. But the ground of sin lies not only in ignorance, or unbelief, but in the infirmity of a perverted will, and the work of redemption, therefore, must be something beyond a mere outward exhibition; it must consist in the real communication and implanting of a new nature, to reunite the soul with God. The redeeming power must then be

* Günther *Die Incarnationstheorie*. Wien, 1829. His Philosophical Works were placed on the Roman Index.

sought in the *life* of Christ, but it can only be imparted through His death. The Son of God took, in His Incarnation, a human body under the conditions of fallen nature transmitted from Adam, though without sin. This body of death He offered up to God, pouring out the earthly blood and animal soul or life,* and thus satisfied justice and opened the hands of love. The necessity for His death does not rest on any attribute of the divine nature, for God is Love, but on some quality of human nature, which as yet we cannot fully comprehend, but which is indicated by the statement of Scripture, that 'without shedding of blood there is no remission,' for the soul is in the blood, and the blood is that which atones for the soul. It is clear that this theory lays a special stress on the Incarnation, and views the death of Christ chiefly as a channel for conveying the benefits of the Incarnation to us, but the precise meaning of the latter portion of it I do not profess to understand. We may compare with it the following considerations of the philosopher Baader on the nature of human sinfulness.† The soul of man, subjected through the Fall to the bondage of matter, can only through the medium of matter be restored to the freedom of spiritual life. But the blood, as the special organ of animal life, is also the organ of sin. By the oblation of the outpoured blood the spiritual powers of man were set free, and the impure influences, which held him in thraldom, passed from him into that which was offered up, while the blood thus offered

* This may remind the reader of some similar expressions of Origen's, previously referred to.

† Baader *Vorlesungen über eine kunftige Theorie des Opfers oder Kultus.* Münster, 1837.

and consecrated in the death of Christ returned as a life-giving and fruitful principle into the substance of those for whom it was offered. This view of Baader's seems, at least in language, to come very near the Manichean notion of the impurity of matter.

And now let us turn to a theologian already mentioned, who is comparatively free from the lengthy periods and needless periphrasis often so perplexing in German writers, and speaks with a clearness at times almost rising into eloquence. A brief account of his general system will best introduce his exposition of the doctrine of Atonement.* The idea of God, as the *Ego*, or absolute Being, implies from eternity the idea of the creature, the *non ego*, or conditioned being, as its necessary correlative. But the actual realization of the *non ego*, as *natura naturata Dei quâ naturæ naturantis*, is not necessary, as the pantheistic scheme implies. Creation is a free act of God, implying a beginning, as the absolute nature is essentially necessary and eternal; but the conditioned once actually brought into existence must last for ever, as the creaturely reflexion of the absolute Being of God. There was no theoretical necessity for Him to create, but there was an ethical ground in His own nature, and that ground was love. As then by His free love He created us, so by love alone can the creature gain or

* This sketch is drawn mainly from Pabst's *Der Mensch und seine Geschichte* (Wien, 1830), but I have also compared with it a later work of his, *Adam und Christus* (Wien, 1835), where the subject is treated as introductory to an elaborate dissertation on the seven sacraments, and especially marriage, viewed in its sacramental character, to which the author attaches a crucial importance as marking the distinction between Catholicism and various forms of imperfect or unchristian belief. It would be impossible to give each reference separately here; the reader will have no trouble in verifying them, if he pleases, for himself.

preserve its union with Him. Creation is God's eternal revelation of Himself. The creature cannot attain to a real consciousness of its own being, without thereby becoming conscious of the absolute Being or Creator. As in the unity of God there are Three Persons, so creation, which is His image, is threefold also. There is free spirit, nature or the physical universe which is unfree, and man in whom both are combined, spirit and nature standing to each other in the relation of substance and accident. Man constitutes the organic unity of the two; he is at once distinct from each and partakes of both; in him the life of nature puts forth its most perfect bloom, while he is also a member of the spirit-world, and thus creation, as the outward revelation of God, becomes 'the perfect reflexion of the divine consciousness.' As the organic unity of nature and spirit, man is the 'coping-stone of creation,' the creature of all creatures, the ultimate realization and representative of the creaturely idea, and perfect antithesis of the Creator. Or, as the author says elsewhere, he is the last and most glorious fruit of the mighty increase of the earth, the wondrous fabric *(Gebilde)* wherein God by a new and special creative act has bound the two worlds of spirit and matter into organic unity.

From this idea of creation is deduced the idea of sin, as consisting in a refusal on the creature's part to recognize its creatureliness, and consequent dependence on the absolute Being of God. It involves an infinite debt *(Schuld)* incurred by the creature, and an infinite offence against the Creator, whom it directly tends, so far as in it lies, to dethrone, because it is a negation of His self-existent Being. By thus denying God it

also denies the very basis of all creaturely existence, and turns the life of the spirit into a lie, corrupting its whole being, and marring, though it cannot destroy, the image of God. It involves an eternal enmity between the creature and the Creator, as being a wilful aversion from the Highest Good; in a word, it involves Hell, not as an infliction of the divine wrath, but as the inevitable sequel of its own act in choosing self-love rather than the love of God. Such are the effects of sin on the spirit-world; its effects on the world of man are further modified by the conditions of his composite nature, which is not mere spirit, but formed of spirit and matter combined, each individual being part of an organic whole, the member of a race. Hence it follows, that the sin of the first and typical man becomes, not personally but generically, the heritage of all his children; for though God creates each soul separately, He creates it with reference to the particular body it is destined to inhabit, not for a separate existence, but to become part of the composite man who is a member of the race.* Sin, then, has a direct effect in dissolving, *ipso facto*, the organization of humanity. The parts lose their proper relationship and union with each other, and both are accordingly dishonoured, the spiritual enslaved to the material, the material itself made subject to a law of decay and death extending over the whole physical creation. The earth is cursed for man's sake.

But in the very ground of the curse lay also the possibility of redemption. The generic transmission of our fallen humanity, compounded of free spirit and

* The author alludes to 'creationism' as opposed to 'traducianism.'

unfree matter, which was the channel of sin, might prove the means of restoration, whenever a sinless descendant of the first Adam should appear to become the Second Head and Father of the race, the Source to them of original merit *(Erbverdienst)* instead of original sin *(Erbsünde)*. But this could only be One who was God as well as man. The Spirit, who is the Bond of Love in the Holy Trinity, and had been at first the Principle of union between the creature and the Creator, immediately departed on the entrance of sin into the world. But the divine Logos, by whom all things were made, as immediately took His place, and began at once to speak with authority in the conscience, so that man's life, amid manifold errors and darkness, remained a religious one, and was never wholly cut off from God even amid the deepest gloom of Heathendom.* Conscience, as was shown in the case of Cornelius, contained in itself the germ of redemption, and indeed of the future Church. We may say with Justin Martyr, "Those, like Socrates and Heraclitus, who lived according to the Logos (inwardly revealed) were Christians." Or, in the author's own words, "Conscience in its objectivity is the beginning of the external Church, and the Church is the objective perfection of conscience, having attained its outward fulfilment." But, inasmuch as this inward revelation to the individual conscience proved insufficient, an outward revelation was added, and that, being addressed to fallen man, could only be a revelation of the Redeemer. It was given first in the Covenant with Abraham, then in the Law of Sinai, which 'fixed the

* I need hardly remind the reader of the famous argument for the supremacy of conscience in Butler's *Sermons on the Constitution of Human Nature.*

categorical imperative of conscience in tables of stone.' In the life of His chosen people God revealed a type of His dealings with mankind, and their history exhibited, as in a picture, the history and the judgment of the world. The Levitical priesthood recalled the reality of sin, the Prophetic Order spoke out with growing distinctness, as time went on, the promise of redemption.

We have seen that the created spirit had realized its creaturely freedom in the choice of evil, through what must be considered a second creative act. Restoration therefore could only be brought about through a new creative act, not to annihilate the former, which in itself is irreversible, but to abolish its results *(dass sich dieselbe.....obschon nicht in ihrem Seyn, doch in ihrem Daseyn aufhebt und auslöscht)*. And this was a fresh revelation of God, not like the first, as absolute Being, but as the Redeemer and Atoner, to renew that life, originally derived from Himself, which the creature had lost by sin. It must be at once an act of satisfaction wrought out through the perfect obedience of a sinless Child of the fallen race, and an act of creation and revelation vouchsafed by God; therefore only the God-man could accomplish it. This double work of restoration has necessarily a gradual development, with various epochs and periods, and this, as we have seen, was actually the case. First the still small voice of God spoke, 'as from afar,' to the conscience of man; next He revealed Himself more intimately through the covenant with Abraham, and the Jewish ritual; and at last in the fulness of time the divine fiat went forth, and the Word made Flesh proclaimed Himself the Way, the Truth, and

the Life. He by whom all things were made at the beginning came to remake them. The union of God and man in One Person finds a type and analogy in the union of spirit and material nature in man, which is also an organic union of life; and in the God-man each nature remains perfect and entire.* In His birth of a Virgin we read both His identity with our common humanity and His distinction from it. He is a member, not a product, of the race. The Second Adam, like the first is (as Man) an immediate creation of God, but, unlike the first, takes root in the soil of humanity, as being formed not from the ground, but from the consecrated substance of a pure Virgin, daughter of Eve. The thirty years of His hidden life represent His fellowship with our nature, as Son of Man; the three years of His public ministry represent His manifestation, as the Son of God with power, in His threefold office of King, Priest, and Prophet. In His character as Second Adam and Head of the race, He passed, like the first Adam, through the trial and probation of free-will, not for Himself but for us. The first man was placed for probation in the 'Paradise of pleasure,' where every need was satisfied; the Second was driven into the wilderness, that brought forth thorns and thistles, the heritage of Adam's sin, to be tempted of the devil after fasting forty days. Each of

* I omit the author's account of the hypostatic union, which does not materially differ from that in the ordinary manuals. He rejects, as inconsistent with the perfection of manhood, the common opinion of a full infusion of beatific and other knowledge into our Lord's Human Soul from the first, and holds, with some of the Fathers, that there was a real growth in wisdom, not only in its outward manifestations. The question will be found discussed in Wilberforce's *Incarnation*, ch. iv., Kuhn's *Leben Jesu*, i. 5. See also Petav. *De Incarn.* xi. 2-4, with the notes of Alethinus, who takes the same view as Pabst, and on the same grounds, as most consistent with the entire κένωσις of the Incarnation.

the three Temptations was an attempt in different forms to make Him deny or doubt, if but for a moment, the perfect union of His human will with God. In His victory over the Tempter through the free exercise of that human will, though He was impeccable by virtue of the hypostatic union, He asserted, what Adam's sin had denied, the absolute dependence of the creature on the Creator, and proclaimed before Heaven and Hell the entire conformity of His creaturely will with the will of God. And thus the work of redemption was begun.*

Since man by wilful disobedience had incurred the debt of sin, only through willing obedience of the whole life and being could that debt be paid. And in order to profit the whole race, the payment must take the shape of what in man is the natural consequence and fruit of sin. The entire life of the Redeemer, in great things as in small, must fulfil the ideal of penance, which in mankind is an inevitable necessity, but in Him was a voluntary sacrifice. This self-oblation, inaugurated in John's baptism of repentance, was consummated in the dereliction and the Cross. But His merit (*Erbverdienst*) can only be applied to His members individually by their own coöperation. Redemption is universal, justification depends on the human will; and as all, whether under the law of nature, or of Moses, or of grace, are lost who by personal act make the common sin of the race their own, so those alone can partake of the common merit

* There is an interesting discussion in *Adam und Christus* (pp. 76-83) on the relations of the freedom of Christ's human will to His impeccability, but it would take us too far from our proper subject to introduce it here. Cf. Kuhn's *Leben Jesu* (Mainz, 1838), vol. i. ch. 4.

who by voluntary union with the life of Christ, the ideal Man, make His merit theirs; so that what before were fruitless sufferings become in them a meritorious satisfaction. This double connection of humanity with the first Adam and the Second explains that strange intermingling of good and evil, sorrow and joy, which would else be the great riddle of life. For redemption as little destroyed our freedom as the Fall, and those who are led of the Spirit of Christ must be content to share in this world the common penalties of the race, just as those who in heart reject Him are still, as yet, His brethren after the flesh. When, lastly, Christ had made by the Sacrifice of the Cross an overflowing redemption *(copiosa redemptio)* and gone down into Hades, to pay to the uttermost the debt of sin, He rose transfigured from the grave and ascended into heaven, to send back the Spirit, who had been chased away by sin, as the Teacher of all truth, and Comforter in all trials and temptations. Thus was the work of redemption perfected, and summed up in the baptismal formula in the name of the Holy Trinity. The divine Spirit had, as we have seen, at the beginning united the dependent creature with the self-existent God, and now that same Spirit came once more to sanctify and re-unite the ransomed race with Him. As the work of re-creation is properly allotted to the Son who is the Creative Word, so is the work of re-union assigned to the Spirit who is the Bond of Love.

The Church of the Old Dispensation was the representative of the coming Christ, the Church of these latter days is the representative of the Word made Flesh, who must be ever present in it as the infallible Interpreter and great High Priest, with His abiding Sacrifice. His life-long obedience to God, and His

life-long toil for man were concentrated and sealed in the act of death, the 'bright bloom of the world-redeeming work of Christ.' Therefore that sacrificial act must continue to be the supreme and characteristic worship of God on earth, from which all other kinds of worship derive their consecration and their worth. Mankind cannot celebrate its solemn Easter without the Easter Lamb. It was impossible but that the Cross should become an altar, the material sacrifice of Christ offered up in blood be perpetuated in an unbloody rite, that is in the sacrifice of the Mass. But the Mass is a Sacrament as well as a sacrifice; the sacrifice sets forth the death of the Son of Man in its relation to God, in the Communion is shown the death of the Second Adam in its relation to humanity; in the former He is present as representative of the race, in the latter as the Fountain of their new life. As in the Mass there is offered with the Body and Blood of Christ the whole family of believers, so in Communion the redeemed are made partakers of that Body and Blood, that they may have life in themselves. And thus are His words fulfilled; "If I be lifted up, I will draw all things unto Me."

Such, then, are some specimens of the teaching of recent German Catholic theologians on the Atonement.* Of its treatment by modern Lutheran writers something shall be said presently. Meanwhile let us revert for a moment to a famous controversy carried on in France between two of the most distinguished writers of the seventeenth century. Among the many questions,

* It may be expected to be discussed in the next volume of a theological work now in course of publication by Dr. Kuhn, Professor of Dogmatics in the Catholic Faculty of Tübingen, one of the most distinguished among living German theologians.

philosophical and theological, on which Malebranche and Arnauld were opposed to each other, one was that so often alluded to in these pages, on the motive of the Incarnation. In his *Treatise on Nature and Grace*, the great Oratorian maintains, that Jesus Christ, though His birth among men occurred in the fulness of time, is, in the eternal counsels, the Beginning of the ways of God, the Firstborn of all creation, and the predestined Model whereon our humanity was formed after the image of His. The Word and Wisdom of God, foreseeing among all possible creatures none other that was worthy, offered Himself, to establish as Sovereign Priest an everlasting worship in honour of His Father, and to present a Victim deserving of His acceptance. The world was created for the sake of the Church, that is of Christ who is its Head, and man was formed after the image of Christ, to be the ornament of this visible temple. So far Malebranche said no more than had often been said before him. But he goes on to observe, that it was requisite for the fulfilment of His design that man should be subject on earth not only to trials and afflictions, but to the movements of concupiscence, in order to illustrate the victories of grace; and that the sin of the first man was *necessary*, because for making the elect merit that glory which shall be one day theirs no means could be comparable to leaving them for a while immersed in sin *(de les laisser tous envelopper dans le péche pour leur faire à tous miséricorde en Jésus Christ)*, inasmuch as the glory they acquire by resisting concupiscence through the grace of Christ is greater than any other.* This need not, and per-

* Malebranche *Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce*, ii, 24, 30, 31, *sqq.* Arnauld replied in his *Réflexions Philosophiques et Theologiques.*

haps did not, mean more than St. Paul's statement, that God has concluded all under sin, or in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all, or than the somewhat poetical exclamation of the Roman ritual, *O certe necessarium Adæ peccatum quod Christi morte deletum est.* Indeed Malebranche seems to have moulded his language on such expressions as these. Still he certainly laid himself open to the retort, which was actually made, that on this theory the Fall was not simply permitted but predestined by God, and that 'humanity was sacrificed for Christ, not Christ for humanity.' Arnauld, however, by no means contented himself with objecting to this part of his opponent's system. He appealed to the authority of Aquinas—which is of course on his side—against the Scotist idea of the Incarnation as independent of the Fall; and, with less prudence, asserted in reliance on Thomassin—what is unquestionably incorrect—that the Fathers are unanimous in making the decree of the Incarnation depend on the prevision of sin. It was not to be expected that theologians, whose characteristic principle it was to grudge the universality of redemption, should appreciate what must have appeared to them the very superfluous charity of assuming a nature which did not need to be redeemed. And Arnauld, highly as we may and must respect him as a man and a writer, was, unhappily, deeply imbued with the theological idiosyncracies of his school. He seems on some points to have had the better of his antagonist, whose antipathy to the Jansenistic scheme of predestination did not preserve him from starting another theory, on the relations of grace to the human Soul of Christ, equally arbitrary and in its results equally

objectionable.* But, on the whole, we may fairly consider Malebranche as representing in this dispute the patristic and Catholic tradition, while the great champion of Jansenism, like the Lutherans and Calvinists before him, adopts the narrower system, which had found favour with some of the Schoolmen, and which till of late has generally prevailed in the more orthodox Protestant theology.†

Here, then, our record of the past may be closed. For the future, since the fall of the old Sorbonne, and during the present lull of theological energy in Italy and Spain, we look with anxious hope to the Catholic thinkers of Germany, that nation once the sovereign power of Christendom, but into whose hands in these later days the torch of sacred as of secular science has been committed, and which, like Greece of old, in the decay of political greatness is conquering for itself a nobler and more enduring empire in the leadership of European thought. We turn to the land where Boniface preached and suffered, the cradle of the Anglo-Saxon race, and ask its people to repay their kinsmen in the fruits of sanctified intellect, from whom in earlier days they received the heritage of faith.

* Some account of the controversy may be found in Sainte Beuve's *Port Royal* (Paris, 1859), tom. v. ch. 6. The author seems, strangely enough, to imagine that Malebranche *first invented* the idea of the Incarnation being predestined independently of the purpose of redemption.

† See Note at the end of Chapter on 'Recent Lutheran Theology.'

NOTE I. ON CHAP. VI.

ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS AND THE EUCHARIST.

It has been already observed that Sacrifice, that is, the self-devotion of the whole being, is the rightful homage due from the creature to the Creator, and therefore was from the beginning the proper idea of divine worship (λατρεία.) It is what constitutes, in technical language, the *differentia* of the supreme worship of God, as distinguished from all subordinate and derivative kinds of worship, some of which may also be offered to our fellow-creatures, whether living or departed. Thus, incense is not only presented at the altar, but to the officiating clergy and congregation also; so, again, we may ask the Saints at rest or friends on earth to pray for us, which is a kind of worship; or, to take another instance, outward acts of devotion, as bending the knee, are paid to earthly sovereigns. But to offer sacrifice, if only by an internal act of the mind, to any created being is the essence of idolatry, and a sin against the first and great commandment. The true worship of God, then, always consisted in sacrifice, both internal and external; though the outward expression might vary according to time and circumstance, and was in fact essentially changed by the sacrifice of Christ. Meanwhile the idea itself had been modified by the introduction of sin into the world, which gave it a new character of reparation (cf. Chap. IV.) and made all human sacrifice imperfect. One alone could now offer a full and perfect satisfaction and oblation: in the life and death of Christ the idea received not merely its highest, but its sole adequate fulfilment. In the eternal purpose of God He was 'the Lamb Slain from the foundation of the world,' and all acts of human worship were accepted, so far as they were accepted, in and through

that One spotless Sacrifice, though the worshippers knew it not. But when in the fulness of time the Lamb had been slain, not in predestination but in fact, that One Sacrifice once offered became, from the nature of the case, and in reality not in symbol, the true and characteristic worship of the Catholic Church. Types were necessarily abolished; commemorations there might be, but they are not properly sacrifice, and are therefore insufficient; to repeat the One Sacrifice is impossible; to attempt a supplement or a substitute would be both useless and profane. Therefore the *same* Sacrifice must abide for ever in the Church.

Two things then are clear: (1) that the distinctive and supreme worship of the Church must still, as of old, be a worship of sacrifice, or it would not, strictly speaking, be worship at all; (2) that since the One great Oblation has been actually offered, to which nothing can be added, and which cannot be repeated, the Christian Sacrifice must be, not prefigurative like those of the law, or commemorative merely, but *identical* with that of the cross. For no other sacrifice is henceforth possible, or conceivable. Every Christian prayer, indeed, commemorates the Sacrifice of Christ, and is accepted through it; but the central act of worship must be that very Sacrifice itself, though offered in a different manner on the altar and on the cross. It is not repeated but *continued* in the Church on earth, through the ministry of His representatives, as in the courts of Heaven directly by Himself. And from this follows also the reality of His Presence. The same Body and Blood which were offered on Calvary must be offered in the Christian Sacrifice (though the manner of the Presence as of the oblation differs), or the Sacrifice could not be the same. Bread and wine, however sacred from consecration to a sacred use (like the water of baptism or the oil of confirmation or of the last unction), could never become the material of more than a commemorative rite. If the oblation is the same, the thing offered must be the same too. And therefore the Real Presence of the divine Victim is essential to the reality of the Sacrifice.*

Hence, again, it follows, that the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews, often quoted against the truth of the Eucharistic Sacrifice,

* This is not the place to enter on the Doctrine of the Real Presence. The philosophical side of the question is discussed with great acuteness in Dalgairns' *Holy Communion* (Duffy, 1862); Cardinal Wiseman has exhibited the scriptural argument, with special reference to Oriental languages, in his *Lectures on the Blessed Eucharist* (Dolman, 1836); and the patristic argument is drawn out in Wilberforce's *Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (Mozley, 1853).

in fact confirms it. For what is the drift of that argument? That the One Sacrifice of Christ has superseded and abolished all types and shadows of the Law, and is itself incapable of supplement or iteration. He has, we are told, an 'unchangeable Priesthood,' and is 'a Priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedec.' What is this but to say, that His Sacrifice abides for ever in the Church, and remains for all time the supreme act of creaturely adoration, and centre of all Christian worship? Or, in other words, that glorified Body, which He presents continually before God in heaven, He presents no less truly, though 'in a mystery,' on our altars, in whose sight the visible and invisible Church are not two but one Kingdom of God. What Christ really offered by anticipation in the upper room at Jerusalem He offers really now by perpetuation in heaven and on earth.

In illustration of what has been said, I subjoin a passage from a great living theologian, forming the close of a dissertation on 'the Eucharist as a Sacrament and a Sacrifice,' the whole of which is well worth perusal; "Thus the Christian Sacrifice is at once permanent, and single. Its unity does not contradict its duration, nor its duration prevent its being ever one and indivisible. The offering of that Sacrifice is indeed divided into numberless acts, according to the conditions of time and space in this earthly life; but they are brought into unity and held together through the Person of Christ, in whom and with whom His ministers do all their acts. It is precisely in this multiplicity of the oblation, by which the One ever-living Victim is offered and the Sacrifice of the Cross constantly applied anew in its effects to the whole body and to its individual members, that the perfection and indissoluble power of that Sacrifice reveals itself. To the retrospective glance of the Christian the number of sacrificial acts on the altars of the Church at once take their place, as dependent on that one heavenly offering, which again depends on that of the Cross, as one single celebration of sacrifice. 'For Christ is gone into heaven itself to appear now for us before the presence of God.' It is no new immolation that takes place, only that once offered on Golgotha is shown to the Christian people in a symbolic act sensibly representing the separation of body and blood in death. The Cross has developed into a living Tree, ever green and ever fruitful, overshadowing the Church of all times and all places."*

* Döllinger's *Christenthum und Kirche* (ut supr.), p. 256.

Lastly, I will give, as it stands, the statement on this subject in the Tridentine Catechism; "Unum igitur et idem sacrificium esse fatemur, et haberi debet, quod in missa peragitur, et quod in Cruce oblatum est; quemadmodum una est et eadem Hostia, Christus videlicet Dominus noster, qui Se Ipsum in ara Crucis semel tantummodo cruentum immolavit. Neque enim cruenta et incruenta Hostia duæ sunt Hostiæ, sed una tantum; cujus sacrificium postquam Dominus ita præcepit, 'Hoc facite in Meam commemorationem,' in Eucharistia quotidie instauratur. Sed unus etiam atque idem Sacerdos est, Christus Dominus; nam ministri, qui sacrificium faciunt, non suam, sed Christi Personam suscipiunt, cum Ejus Corpus et Sanguinem conficiunt. Id quod et ipsius consecrationis verbis ostenditur. Neque enim sacerdos inquit, 'Hoc est Corpus Christi,' sed 'Hoc est Corpus Meum,' Personam scilicet Christi Domini gerens, panis et vini substantiam in veram Ejus Corporis et Sanguinis, substantiam convertit."*

It is superfluous to add passages from the Fathers in evidence of their well-known and unanimous teaching on the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

* *Cat. ad Par.* Pars II., cap. iv., Q. 74, 75.

NOTE II. ON CHAP. VI.

RECENT LUTHERAN THEOLOGY ON THE MOTIVE OF THE INCARNATION.

It has been observed more than once, that the Scotist view of the motive of the Incarnation was foreign to the ideas of the Reformation. It was indeed maintained by Osiander, as we have seen, but the exception is exactly of that kind which proves the rule, for here, as in many other points, Osiander felt himself and was felt by his coreligionists to be out of harmony with the general Lutheran sentiment of his day. With him began that reaction against the first Reformers, which has been traced out in an earlier chapter, and which lasted till the Reformation merged into the Rationalist movement in Germany. A similar spirit has however reappeared in our own day in some of the more eminent Lutheran divines of the orthodox school, and their adoption of the Scotist view as an integral part of their system is an illustration of it. It may be worth while to give a few instances of this.

Martensen, a Danish Lutheran, whose work, *Die christliche Dogmatik* (Kiel, 1850), I quote from a German translation, teaches as follows. Man is created after the image of the divine *Logos*. The 'supralapsarian' view of Calvin, that redemption, and therefore sin, was predestined from eternity is met by saying that the Incarnation was predestined from eternity as the true ideal of humanity, but not the Passion and death of the God-man. It resulted from our wilful sin, that 'the divine revelation of love actually took place as a revelation of redemption.' Christ can only become our Redeemer because He is by an eternal purpose our Mediator. We must not say, that 'without sin there would have been no place in the human

family for the glory of the Only-begotten.' He, who would anyhow have been the Mediator of an imperfect race, has humbled Himself yet further to become the Redeemer of a sinful race. (*Christ. Dogm.* pp. 157, 193-5, 294.) The author, while accepting generally the language of the Lutheran formulas, gives them an interpretation widely different from that of their founders. The shocking exaggerations of Luther and Calvin on the nature and consequences of original sin are softened down to a sense little, if at all, different from that of Catholic tradition. The satisfaction of Christ is explained through His redemption, and justification as implying the gift of a new principle of holiness implanted in the soul. The appeasing the wrath of God, and the 'active obedience' of Christ, which play so important a part in earlier Protestant theology, are reduced to conformity with the teaching of the Fathers; while many Lutheran *opinions* are expressly rejected, as the ubiquity of Christ's Body, and the Lutheran gloss on the descent into Hell. An intermediate state of purification between death and judgment is maintained, nor does Martensen object to call it Purgatory; he prefers the mediæval opinion to that of the Reformers as to the age of the resurrection body. The book is interesting in itself, and as marking the contrast between earlier and later Lutheranism. It closes with a remarkable discussion on the future condition of the wicked, with scriptural and patristic authorities.

Thomasius, a professor at Erlangen, of narrower views than Martensen, whose work on Origen has already been referred to, discusses the motive of the Incarnation at some length in his *Christi Person und Werk* (Erlangen, 1853), urging the authority of Scripture, Fathers, and Schoolmen against Martensen's view, which he rejects as well on that account as from thinking that it derogates from the love of Christ, and refers His taking our nature to an internal necessity in the being of God, not to compassion for man—an objection which would be at least equally applicable to the Anselmic and many Protestant theories of satisfaction; but in fact it does not really apply at all here, for the intention of taking our humanity in order to unite us with God is itself one free act of love, the further purpose of suffering for our redemption is another. Thomasius considers the decree of the Incarnation to be included in the decree of creation, modified through the entrance of sin foreseen though not predestined by God. He says that in Christ the archetype of humanity is bodily fulfilled. He quotes Dorner, as holding the opposite (Scotist) view; but the

purely historical character of Dorner's work does not give scope for treating such questions directly.

Nägelsbach, in his work *Der Gottmensch* (Nürnberg, 1853), devoted to showing, as against atheism and pantheism, that the God-man is 'the fundamental idea of revelation in its unity and historical development,' maintains that the union between God and man, which love requires, can only be realized by God taking on Himself not abstract but actual humanity, *i. e.* becoming man. His Incarnation cannot be accidental. It is opposed, as Kurtz says, to all Christian feeling and consciousness, that we should owe it, and the deification of our nature, only to sin. It is implied in the very principle of love, that this was from the first the end and scope of human history. Its first prophecy is not Gen. iii. 15, but Gen. i. 26. The First Adam implies the Second. All previous history was an education of the world for His coming, all Christian history springs from Him as its Root, whose appearance is the centre-point in the life of the world. (*Der Gottmensch*, vol. i. pp. 28-32.) Liebner, in his *Christologie* (Gottingen, 1849), argues at length, that the Incarnation and the consequent deification of our nature were involved in the original act of creative love, as the archetype and proper term of humanity. He answers in detail the objections of Thomasius.

Rothe, one of the greatest Lutheran divines of the day, in his *Theologische Ethik* (vol. ii. pp. 252-338), treats of the redemption wrought by Christ. He does not expressly touch on the probabilities of the Incarnation, as antecedent to sin; but he considers redemption involved in the original act of creation, though requiring a fresh creative act or new beginning of the race, proceeding from the race itself, but by a supernatural origin: *i. e.* a Second Adam. The author traces out the preparation for Christ's coming under the Old Law by the moral education of mankind, and by miracle and prophecy, leading up to the final revelation in His personal appearance, the end of which is redemption, or restored communion between God and men, by the removal of sin which divided them. In order to mediate between God and man, He must share the nature of both perfectly, and must make a free and complete self-oblation of His whole being for the honour of God, and for love of man; and this in a sinful world, hating holiness and truth, and under the dominion of Satan, can only be consummated through the sacrifice of His life. To impart the fruits of His redemption, He has founded a spiritual kingdom or family among men, whereof He is the Head and Heart,

from which the life of the whole body is derived. For the redemption of sinful humanity, wrought fully once for all by Himself, must be applied separately to individual members of the race. Only so can actual redemption and propitiation before God be accomplished for them, through the removal of sin and of the debt and punishment which are its consequences. Pardon cannot be bestowed, unless there is a guarantee for the actual casting out of sin. When the sinner is thus reconciled with God, a gradual process of renewal follows, in which the moral and religious elements are constantly tending to become identified. For cases of death-bed conversion, and even for those who die unconverted, there still remains till the end of the present world and the general judgment an intermediate state of trial, probably by fire (for which Mark ix. 49 is quoted). But a time comes sooner or later, when the being is wholly turned to evil, (*dämonisirt,*) and no further change is possible. Conversion after death is harder than before, and the higher position once forfeited can never be regained. (Ib., pp. 190-2, 484, 488.)

Similar specimens of modern Lutheran teaching might easily be multiplied; but these are taken as a sample, from some of the principal contemporary divines of that body.

CHAPTER VII.

MORAL FITNESS OF THE ATONEMENT IN RELATION TO MAN.

And now that we are come to the end of our inquiry, does it not almost seem as if we were still at the beginning? Are we not tempted to exclaim, with the philosopher of old, that the end of all knowledge is the consciousness of our ignorance? Doubtless what Coleridge said of philosophy is even more true of theology, that it begins in wonder and ends in wonder. Indeed this is but to repeat the language of the ritual, that He, who has wonderfully created our nature, has yet more wonderfully redeemed it.

"Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind."*

After all has been said, much must ever remain unsaid. Our deepest feelings are precisely those we are least able to express; and, even in the act of adoration, silence is our highest praise. Still, without attempting to dogmatize on points beyond the sphere of revelation, we may gather up some results, both negative and positive, from what has been recorded of the past. Not to dwell on minor undercurrents of opinion or

* Göthe's *Faust.*

belief, we have seen the successive waves of two great theories of satisfaction pass over the surface of theology, and again retire, but not without leaving indelible traces behind them. First came the Origenist notion of a ransom paid to the Evil Spirit, which found its latest utterance in Peter Lombard, but was then already merging into the broader and more spiritual conception of a victory over sin, and therefore over him who is its author. After this followed the Anselmic conception of an infinite satisfaction for an infinite debt, discussed in all its bearings throughout the scholastic period, and almost universally rejected, but finding new advocates at the Reformation, and becoming in their hands the basis of a system, which has served first to distort, and then to alienate, the moral and religious convictions of a large section of Christendom. The scholastic controversy brought out with peculiar clearness that, while we have no right to assume that an adequate satisfaction was *necessary*, a satisfaction not only sufficient but superabundant has certainly been made, owing to the infinite worth, by virtue of the hypostatic union, of those human acts and sufferings which the Redeemer offered as the Head and Representative of our race. We cannot, again, say, except by a figure of speech, that our sins were imputed to Him, or that He who was sinless endured the wrath of God; still less, in the blasphemous language of several Lutheran divines, that He suffered the torments of the damned. Yet it is certain, that the mental greatly exceeded the bodily sufferings of the Passion, and that they were chiefly, though not exclusively, supernatural. Even those which at first blush might seem purely natural, as the awful solitude

of which the Prophet spoke, or the 'contradiction' fore told by Simeon and noticed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, have their supernatural side also. The Agony in the Garden and dereliction on the Cross represent, in the language of prophecy, an 'ocean of sorrow,' on whose shore we may stand, and gaze down upon the waveless surface; but the depths below no created intelligence can fathom. That, in some sense to us incomprehensible, Jesus received into His human consciousness the countless sins of all generations of mankind, and vouchsafed to learn by experience what it is to be shut out from the Eternal Love, is attested by the fourth word on the Cross, and the sweat of Blood. *Dolor Meus in conspectu Meo semper.* We can but adore in silence the inscrutable secret of those 'unknown agonies,' the interior martyrdom sealed at last in death.

The controversies of the Reformation threw a fresh light on the subjective and moral aspects of the doctrine, and exhibited with peculiar distinctness the error of supposing, that the Atonement wrought by Christ was to be understood as superseding our own satisfactions or obedience, instead of sanctifying and transforming them. This was in fact the question that lay at the root of the long disputes on justification, and the nature of justifying faith.

Another idea elicited in the course of discussion is, that in all probability the Son of God, 'the Firstborn of every creature,' would have assumed our nature, and sanctified it by personal indwelling, though we had needed no redemption. We could not have argued *à priori* that He would come at all, or that, when we had fallen, He would come to die. We could not have

told that the Incarnation of Jesus was to be the means of our union with the Godhead, or that our atonement, if atonement was needed, would be wrought by His death. Nor can we tell *why* it has been so now. The reasons lie deep in the counsels of eternal wisdom. But looking back on what has actually occurred, with the light which revelation throws upon it, we may discern something, if not of the original causes of the Atonement, at least of its adaptation to our nature, and the lessons it is designed to teach. There is a fitness in the belief, that He, who is 'the Brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted Mirror of God's majesty, and Image of His goodness,' would have come to make 'His delights with the children of men,' even if they had persevered in their primal innocence. Still more does it seem natural to us, that, when we had sinned, He should consecrate afresh our fallen humanity in the baptism of blood; and this for many reasons.

1. Pain, as has been already said, is the deepest and truest thing in our nature since the Fall. We feel instinctively that it is so, even before we can tell why. Pain is what binds us most closely to one another and to God. It appeals most directly to our sympathies, as the very structure of language indicates. To go no further than our own, we have English words, such as condolence, to express sympathy with grief; we have no one word to express sympathy with joy. So, again, it is a common remark that, if a funeral and wedding procession were to meet, something of the shadow of death would be cast over the bridal train, but no reflection of bridal happiness would pass into the mourners' hearts. Scripture itself has been not in-

aptly called 'a record of human sorrow.' The same name might be given to history. 'Man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward.' Friendship is scarcely sure till it has been proved in suffering, but the chains of an affection riveted in that fiery furnace are not easily broken. So much then at least is clear, that the Passion of Jesus was the greatest revelation of His sympathy; "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "It was *fitting* that God should make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." And hence Fathers and Schoolmen alike conspire to teach, that one reason why He chose the road of suffering was to knit us more closely to Himself. For this He 'exalted His head,' not on a throne of earthly glory, but on the cross of death. It is no mere accident, but a law of our present being,

> "That to the *Cross* the mourner's eye should turn,
> Sooner than where the stars of Christmas burn." *

And all, in their several degrees and ways, are mourners. From this, too, it follows, that the Cross was not only a manifestation of His love, but, as the apostle reminds us, of His power also. He was lifted up thereon, not only as the great High-priest and true Melchisedec of a better covenant, not only as the Prophet, who could preach most persuasively from that uneasy deathbed of the bleeding tree, but in vindication of the *regal* office, to which also He was anointed by the Eternal Spirit in Mary's womb. The Cross was an altar of Sacrifice, and a chair of Truth,

* *Christian Year.* Good Friday.

but it was also, strange as it may sound to say so, the throne of an everlasting kingdom. It was there the Redeemer asserted His double royalty, over the intellects and the hearts of men.

When is it that we most deeply realize the presence of our *King?* Not when the angel brightness shines on the fields of Bethlehem, and the *Gloria in Excelsis* of angel music rings clear and sweet through the stillness of the midnight heavens; not when the Paschal alleluias sound over the opened Grave; or the mighty wind is rocking the upper chamber, where the Paraclete descends in tongues of flame on the first believers of the infant Church. No; but in the grave solemnity of the Good Friday procession, when altars are stripped, and bells are hushed, and lights burn dim, and the crucifix is veiled, and for that day alone of all the year the daily sacrifice has ceased, as though the reign of Antichrist were come, and the abomination of desolation set up in the most holy place; it is then the strange unearthly melody of the *Vexilla Regis* breaks on the silence of our supernatural sorrow, with the tidings that He, the Crucified, is Lord and King.

> "The royal banners forward go,
> The Cross shines forth in mystic show."

And, therefore, when scarce four centuries had passed since the Crucifixion, the greatest Father of the Church could openly appeal to the glory of that Cross 'once trampled on by the enemy, but now the brightest ornament of a monarch's crown.'* The foolishness of that preaching of the Cross overcame the world; it

* Aug. in Ps. liv. 9.

subdued the pride of philosophy, and tamed the fire of lust. *Domuit orbem non ferro sed ligno.* He with great power had exalted His chosen people, and they exalted His head on the accursed tree; but from that tree, stained with the blood-red dye of empire and of martyrdom, He claimed and conquered the allegiance of mankind. In the words of a writer too early snatched away, "All the other bonds that had fastened down the Spirit of the universe to our narrow round of earth were as nothing in comparison to this golden chain of suffering and self-sacrifice, which at once riveted the heart of man to One, who, like himself, was acquainted with grief."* In this sense also His sacred limbs

> "were nailed,
> *For our advantage*, on the bitter Cross."

What is it, again, that gives to the rolling music of the Psalter, which has echoed for above three thousand years along the corridors of the Jewish or the Christian Church, its peculiar force and charm—a sweetness that never wearies, a power that never fails—and has fitted it to record the most various experiences of individuals and of nations, to syllable the deepest thoughts whether of joy or sorrow which have stirred the hearts, and shaped the destinies, of a hundred generations of the chosen people of God? It is not *only* that marvellous fulness of human utterance, that exquisite refinement and tenderness of pathos, which strike a responsive chord in our inmost being, that have made the Psalter our most cherished manual of

* Arthur Hallam's *Remains*.

secret devotion, the most familiar and universal organ of our public praise. It is this, but it is more than this; their inspired sympathy with every phase of the Redeemer's life-long Passion, with every sentiment of the Heart which gathered up and recapitulated in Itself the collective heart of humanity, has made the songs of Israel the rightful heirloom and common ritual of Christendom. For the history of the Passion is, in one sense, the history of the Church, and in the streets of that 'great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt,' our Lord is not once but perpetually crucified.

2. Once more. Jesus not only drew us to Himself by what in our fallen nature was the most intimate and holiest bond of sympathy; He also transmuted suffering from a chastisement into a means of grace. It became a kind of supplementary sacrament, consecrated in the prayer of Gethsemane, "Thy will be done." He died not, as some have imagined, to supersede our imperfect satisfactions, but to ennoble them, and give them worth. Thenceforth they have a true though derivative value, because they are shadows of His Cross, and sprinkled with His atoning blood. They have merit, not in spite of His meritorious Passion, but because of it. Just as His obedience was not to be the substitute, but the pattern and rule of ours, so too in suffering He left us an example of penance. He did not abolish for His disciples the common doom of sorrow, but sanctified it. He bade them take up their daily cross, but He showed how that cross might be turned from a curse to a beatitude. The cloud of doubt or perplexity has melted away, and His people are free to serve Him, in the spirit not of slaves but

sons. We know that our poor satisfactions are accepted, because they are joined with His. The great law of retributive justice, that sin must suffer, δράσαντι παθεῖν, which suggested the grandest and most religious drama of the ancient world, lay as a heavy burden at the poet's heart. The Sacrifice of Calvary assures us that the law of justice is also a law of love. Suffering is as the rough ore embedded in the earth, out of which may be fashioned crowns of glory or chains of bondage. It is ours to make friends of the wages of iniquity, by offering our righteous chastisements in atonement for our sin. The Passion has impressed on every act of Christian service a new power of reparation. Since Jesus lived as a 'Man of sorrows,' the trials of life have attained a meaning and a dignity; since Jesus died, the solitude of death, of which a Christian philosopher has spoken,* is less terrible than before, the stone is rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, and a light is shed from the Cross on the cleansing fires of the world beyond the grave. When 'the two voices' are striving in man's soul for the mastery, there are others than Faust whose hand has been arrested by the music of the Easter bells.

3. In the method of the Atonement and in its abiding presence in the Church, we are taught the spirit of self-sacrifice, which lies at the root of all human excellence, and is the true measure of our perfection. When we come to present that great Sacrifice on the altar, we are bidden to say; "We give Thee thanks *because of Thy great glory*." He who has learnt the meaning of those words has caught the spirit of the

* "Je mourrai seul." Pascal. *Pensées.*

Eucharist, and of the Cross.* Nor only so. The central act of Christian worship is at once a Sacrifice and a Communion. It teaches us both parts of the precept of charity, self-devotion to God, and self-devotion for the good of man. All genuine nobility of character springs from self-oblivion, and self-oblivion is the spirit of sacrifice. The toil of the mission, the zeal of the apostle, the varied ministries of bodily or spiritual consolation, the meekness of endurance, the heroism of action, the patience of confessorship, the courage of martyrdom—all these are fruits and tokens of the Cross. It is the source of their energy, and the rule of their fulfilment. Tender children, like the boy-martyrs of Japan, have rapturously kissed the cross, whereon they counted it a joy and an honour to die, as Jesus died. On others His death has seemed to be almost visibly imprinted, who, from intense and continuous meditation on the Passion, have exhibited the marks, and felt something of the bodily pains of the Crucified.† But to all His followers, in their measure and degree, must a share be imparted in that communion of sacrifice. It is a contradiction to be 'delicate members of a body whose Head is crowned with thorns.' Obedience, poverty, and virginity, which are among the

* "The Mass is the compendium of the Gospel. It is a heresy in doctrine to acknowledge the Sacrament and to deny the Sacrifice. Worldliness is guilty of a similar practical heresy with regard to holiness. It admits the claims of all its obligations but one, and that is the obligation of sacrifice." Faber's *Precious Blood*, p. 303.

† There can be no doubt about the fact of what is called 'stigmatization,' as in the case of the Tyrolese 'Addolorata,' and others. It is perhaps to be explained as the physiological result of a peculiar concentration of mind on the Passion, rather than as strictly miraculous. But it is not always easy to draw the line. The Precious Blood, and the 'Five Wounds' are among the most popular 'special devotions' in the Church. See also 2 Cor. iv. 10; Gal. vi. 17.

characteristic tokens of the Incarnation, are not, as has sometimes been suggested, the specialities of a particular age or condition of society, though the manner of their exercise may vary. Christianity knows nothing of 'dead virtues,' for in the power and example of the Crucified all graces live. And, even as He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom, so we too are likest Him, when we lay down our lives for the brethren. Nor is that sacrifice less acceptably offered in an age, like the present, of high civilization and refinement, when direct persecution is hardly to be thought of, though it may not win the praise of men, or attract their notice. The inglorious martyrdom of labour, or weariness, or contradiction—'the pang without the palm'—comes nearest His, who on earth was hidden and despised; there are many Saints uncertified by public recognition here, whose names are written in heaven. The lesson of love is taught at Bethlehem, on Calvary love is crucified; but the Incarnate Victim is present still, an abiding Sacrifice, in the Eucharist. To understand what that mystery teaches is to understand the scope of our Christian vocation, our highest law of life. For His was a life-long Sacrifice. That is no fanciful picture, with which Overbeck has familiarized us, of the Boy-Christ on the Cross, with the thrilling prophecy written beneath it, *Dolor Meus in conspectu Meo semper.* And what He voluntarily chose for His earthly lot He made into a privilege for His children. There was a place found for the mourner, the persecuted, the reviled, among the Beatitudes of the kingdom of God.

4. It is a common saying, that cruelty and cowardice

go together; so also do self-sacrifice and tenderness. They are different sides of the same idea. And all the delicacy and romance, so to speak, of Christian tenderness is perceptibly an outgrowth of the Cross. If we compare either the characters of holy men, or the broader facts of history, before and since the Crucifixion, there are few contrasts so remarkable as the presence or absence of that special quality which may be called the grace and bloom of sacrifice, which is the chivalry of self-devotion, and gives to heroic patience its winning and attractive power. Compare Samuel with St. Bernard, or Moses with the Teacher of the Gentiles. The points of resemblance are many and striking, but there is in each case a marked distinction. Moses devoted his life for his people, his brethren after the flesh, and could even pray that his own name might be blotted out of the book of God's remembrance for their sakes; but we seek in vain for that power of world-wide sympathy, at once so universal and so minute, which makes us feel towards the great apostle even now, as we read his words, as though he were a personal friend. Samuel did not cease to pray for his royal master, till the day of his death; but we see nothing of that intense feeling which melted Bernard into an agony of tears, when he preached over a brother's grave.* It is the chief apostle of the Church

* It is not of course meant to deny, that there are exquisite touches of tenderness to be met with in the Old Testament history, as in the recognition of Joseph by his brethren, and still more in the affection of David and Jonathan; but the very vividness with which such instances fix themselves in our memory shows, that they are rare and exceptional. I hope it is not an over refinement to add, that they mostly occur in the case of persons who are commonly recognized as partial types of Christ.

who bids us be 'sympathizing, lovers of the brethren, merciful, courteous.'*

Or turn from individual to national characteristics. Pain, deformity, sickness, sorrow, old age, are an heirloom of the Fall, but their cure or consolation is an outflow from that Heart, which 'for us men and for our salvation' was pierced on Calvary. Rome, Athens, Alexandria, in their palmiest days, took no heed of suffering, or heeded it only as an eyesore to be concealed, or even as a crime to be punished. Our hospitals, refuges, sisterhoods of compassion, and the like, are a shadow cast from the Cross. There have, indeed, in terrible visitations of pestilence been scenes of frenzied selfishness in Christian cities, that do but too well recall the worst moral features of the plague recorded by Thucydides and Lucretius; but there was no Borromeo at Athens to stand, as an angel of mercy, between the living and the dead. There have been in our own day cruel massacres at the barricades of a Christian metropolis, but the gentle self-devotion of Affré was a bequest from the Good Shepherd, whose words hung upon his dying lips. The fierceness of war is not on the whole what it was of old; and, if slavery still unhappily survives in some Christian nations, much at least in its incidents, which the highest public opinion of Rome or Athens allowed, is emphatically condemned by the universal conscience of Christendom.†

Hence, again, the Passion of Jesus has conferred on childhood, and the child-like temper, a new dignity, and made the love of children—for whom a special

* 1 Peter iii. 8.

† See Note at end of Chapter.

sacrament is provided—a reflection and memorial of His own. They were the first to welcome Him on His entrance into this world, the last to sing His praise. Children form the vanguard of the whiterobed army of Martyrs, 'baptized in blood for Jesus' sake' in the cradles of Bethlehem, pursuivants of a long procession from every clime and age. When the representative wickedness of all generations of mankind was concentrated in the crowning act of apostasy which converted the chosen city into a moral wilderness, and seemed, but only seemed, to seal the Tempter's victory, every race, age, sex, condition, but one, conspired to swell his triumph. The purity of the judgment-seat was corrupted, priestly sanctity profaned, the gentleness of woman turned to gall; the crowds who chanted 'Hosanna' on Palm Sunday afternoon were the same that on Friday morning shouted, 'Crucify.' One class alone, so far as the Gospels tell us, never joined that cry. While priests and scribes were plotting under the temple roof the death of its Lord, Hosannas rose once more from boyish voices that would not be put to silence, and the mouths of babes and sucklings rebuked the madness of His people.

More than this; there has been a 'tender grace' thrown over all the relations of thought, of literature, and of life, which may no doubt often degenerate into mere idle sentimentalism, but none the less springs from a deeper and truer appreciation of the sacredness of that humanity, which Jesus sanctified in sorrow and death. One of the greatest modern writers on physical science has commented on the very different application of natural scenery exhibited in classical and in Christian

literature.* There was no subjective poetry among the ancients. "What was evening to the Greek? What was it to the Roman? It was not till Christianity, that true but sadder second thought, had drawn a veil over much that seemed, but only seemed, so clear; till all the light that lay on human life had faded into the hues of twilight, that men began to feel, dimly at first, and as if by instinct, the true significance of that wondrous interval which is not night nor yet day, but more to the heart than either."† As the prismatic hues are centred in the sunbeam, the tenderness of affection, and the experience of life are summed up and harmonized in the Cross.

5. It follows from this, that the vision of Calvary interprets, while it chastens, our yearning for ideal loveliness. Why has even physical beauty so powerful an attraction for us? Why do we so fondly, so madly, so wildly, so passionately love it? Degraded, indeed, the feeling may easily become into shapes of nameless horror, for the 'trail of the serpent' is over all the flowers of our earthly Paradise. But in itself it is surely part of our unfallen nature, a relic of primeval innocence; it is the instinctive cry of the creature for the Creator, the longing of the exiled spirit for the sympathies of an immortal home.‡ In this ideal sense the poet's words are true:—

* See Humboldt's *Kosmos*, vol. ii. ch. 1., Eng. Tr. with the quotations from St. Basil and the two Gregories. Cf. Newman's *Church of the Fathers* (London, 1840), pp. 126, 127.

† I am indebted for this passage to the unpublished Essay of a friend. The nearest approach, so far as I am aware, to modern idealism and subjectivity in classical poetry is to be found in the Idylls of Theocritus, which in their way are unique. Virgil is perhaps an extreme case on the opposite side.

‡ See Pascal's *Pensées* (Paris, 1761), 3, 6.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."*

He was not wrong who taught, that the love of Beauty is indeed no other than the love of Eternal Truth. And only in the brightness of the uncreated Vision can that love find its adequate satisfaction.

"Wir müssen naeh der Heimath gehen,
Um diese heilige Zeit zu sehen."†

But the corruption of what is noblest is most base. The records of Heathendom tell us into what strange aberrations even religious enthusiasm, when undisciplined, may lead its votaries. He, who is the Flower of humanity, 'fairest among the sons of men,' is proposed to our adoration, not so much, as modern art has striven to represent Him, in that winning brightness of His Boyhood which riveted the gaze of the assembled doctors in the temple, or the grace of maturer years which drew upon Him the eyes of all the worshippers in the synagogue of Nazareth before He had begun to speak, but with countenance 'marred more than any man,' with 'no form or comeliness that we should desire Him,' in the dishonour of His Passion, and the cold repose of death. He is lifted on the Cross, a bleeding Victim, to draw all men to Himself. And thus the Cross is a response to our unfulfilled aspirations, while it consecrates our discipline of sorrow. It is a pillar of fire to lighten our eyes, and the shadow

* Wordsworth. *Ode to Immortality.*
† Novalis. *Hymn to Death.*

of a great Rock in a weary land; pointing upwards to the thrones on the right hand and on the left, but reminding us of the chalice of agony, the Red Sea of the baptism of blood.

6. It was observed in an earlier chapter, that Heathen sacrifices could scarcely, if at all, be taken as prefigurements of the death of Christ, and that St. Augustine and others regard even the Jewish sacrificial worship more as a concession to temporary exigences, and a safeguard against idolatry, than as having any special prophetic value. But it must not be forgotten, that such rites tell much of sin, if they throw no light on its expiation. Sacrifice even, nay chiefly, in its most revolting and criminal shapes, not only the thousands of rams, the burnt offerings and calves of a year old, but the first-born offered for transgression, 'the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul,' like other forms of superstition and self-torture, gives unmistakable though distorted expression to man's instinctive sense of guilt, and his dread of punishment.* Other meanings there might be besides, as in the Oriental notion of absorption into the divine essence, or *anima mundi*, through self-annihilation; but still this feeling, however undefined, of remorse and terror is the most radical and most universal explanation. The facts of nature and the experience of human history tended to confirm these impressions. Men could at best but feel after God, if perchance they might find Him, and 'faintly trust the larger hope,' though much in the outward appearance of things seemed to contradict their creed. To assuage

* See Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. ii, ch. 5.

this terror, and turn remorse into repentance, some *act*, so to speak, was needed on God's side, to notify to men, not indeed that He would leave sin unpunished, but that punishment was tempered by mercy. And such an assurance was given in the Incarnation and death of the Eternal Son. It was the divine response to the long and exceeding bitter cry of tortured humanity, deepening from age to age in its conscious or unconscious yearning for the advent of a Redeemer, as it rose from the sinning, suffering multitudes of the Patriarchal, or the Hebrew, or the Heathen world; *O Adonai et Dux domus Israel, O Rex gentium et Desideratus earum, veni et salva hominem quem de limo formásti!*

In the words of the great divine and preacher of our own day; "Why Christ's death was requisite for our salvation, and how it has obtained it, will ever be a mystery in this life. But, on the other hand, the contemplation of our guilt is so growing and so overwhelming a misery, as our eyes open on our real state, that some strong act (so to call it) was necessary, on God's part, to counterbalance the tokens of His wrath which are around us, to calm and reassure us, and to be the ground and the medium of our faith. It seems indeed, as if, in a practical point of view, no mere promise was sufficient to undo the impression left on the imagination by the facts of Natural Religion; but in the death of His Son we have His *deed*—His irreversible deed—making His forgiveness of sin and His reconciliation with our race, no contingency, but an event of past history. He has vouchsafed to evidence His faithfulness and sincerity towards us (if we may dare so to speak), as we must show ours towards Him, not

in word, but by action; which, therefore, becomes the pledge of His mercy, and the plea on which we draw near to His presence;—or, in the words of Scripture, whereas 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,' Christ Jesus is 'set forth as a propitiation for the remission of sins that are past,' to declare and assure us, that, without departing from the just rule by which all men must, in the main, be tried, still He will pardon and justify him that believeth on Jesus."*

Such then are some of the *inferences* that may be drawn from the fact of the Atonement wrought by Christ, though we could not, I repeat, have used them beforehand as arguments to show that it was needed, or that it would be vouchsafed. They do not unlock the secret of the divine counsels, but they help to explain its application to ourselves. We recognize, as through a glass darkly, an utterance of that 'Wisdom that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Most High, and reacheth from one end to the other mightily, sweetly disposing all things;' but we do not pretend to understand it. We may not pierce behind the veil. So much our hearts will tell us, that in the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, but offered in time on Calvary, we have the surest pledge and most perfect revelation of a love that cannot fail. From of old He had loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore in the compassion of His sufferings He drew us to Himself. And, further, the voice of tradition combines with the surmises of reason to suggest to us, that the mystery of the Atonement is part of a

* Newman's *University Sermons*, pp. 106, 107.

yet deeper mystery in the eternal purpose of God. He had always meant to make His tabernacle among men, but He had not meant to die. Only in so far as we comprehend the charity of the Incarnation, can we hope to comprehend aright its consummation in the charity of the Cross.

NOTE TO CHAP. VII.

ON CERTAIN CONTRASTS OF CHRISTIAN AND HEATHEN CIVILIZATION.

The view expressed in the last chapter as to the comparative absence from the old heathen civilization of that gentler phase of humanity, which seems a natural outgrowth from the Cross, may not improbably be considered by many exaggerated or unreal. A few words, therefore, shall be added here, in explanation of what it is intended to convey. It is quite true, that a standard of excellence was attained under the Greek and Roman Republics, which in some respects has never been surpassed, while there are points in which the average morality of Christian States has not unfrequently fallen below it. To dispute this would be as little in the interests of Christianity, as of historical truth. Neither, again, is it to be denied, that many individual characters of heathendom present at least foreshadowings and instalments of the peculiarly Christian virtues, those, I mean, which were not only sanctioned but first distinctly inculcated by the Gospel. To use the words of Tertullian, we discover in many *testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ.* Such preëminently were Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Agricola, and perhaps Seneca; such, in various degrees, were many more who might be named. God never left Himself without a witness among men. On the other hand, it must be confessed, that only in rare and almost exceptional cases is anything like the Christian ideal, as represented by the Sermon on the Mount, realized among ourselves. It is a common remark, that very few lines need be altered in Juvenal's Satires, beyond what is purely local, to make them applicable to the London, or Paris, or Vienna of to-day. Yet it is

important to remember, that, after all allowances, certain broad contrasts remain, which fix a moral gulf between the world of Juvenal and our own.* We gaze in a rapture of admiration on that marvellous creation of genius, the Athens of Pericles, and Socrates, and Phidias, of the mighty orators and poets whose words have rung music in the ears of seventy generations of mankind. We do well to gaze; there has not been such another glory upon the earth. But we are apt to forget that the picture has a darker side, over which distance draws a veil; that, in the language of a writer little likely to undervalue its ideal grace, "if the inner life had been presented to us of that period, which in political greatness and in art is the most brilliant epoch of humanity, we should have turned away from the sight with loathing and detestation."† The plays of Aristophanes tell us something of that inner life; the pages of Petronius Arbiter reveal under the Roman Empire a lower depth of pollution. But the reality must have far exceeded anything our imagination can reproduce.

It is not, however, with the impurity but the cruelty of the old civilizations that we are now concerned, as contrasting with the tenderness of feeling, the scrupulous thoughtfulness for others, which has always been more or less a characteristic of Christian society, and never more so than in our own day. If many things were permitted to the Jews 'for the hardness of their hearts,' many more and worse were practised by the Gentiles. The usages of war and slavery have been alluded to in the text. The condition of women, and in fact the whole system of family life, which was treated simply as a subordinate department of statecraft, are also cases in point; so is the practice of human sacrifice, wherever it prevailed;‡ and the absence, already mentioned, of any public provision for sickness or other inevitable suffering. There is, again, in individuals, even the best of them, a hardness, a want of sympathy and considerateness, of much that falls under the notion of Christian courtesy, which to us would seem almost incredible, if we came across it in real life, at least among

* They are summed up in the Essay "On the State of the Heathen World," in Jowett's *Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. ii., p. 68, *sqq.*

† Ib. p. 71.

‡ Mommsen denies the practice of human sacrifice at Rome; others affirm it. In Greece it did not prevail in historical times, but the public taste was not shocked by legends which record it; nor was the Spartan cryptia looked upon with any special horror, though it would have been alien to Athenian habits.

the educated classes. There are, of course, exceptions; but I speak of the general standard, and of what was not found inconsistent with distinguished personal excellence. Even a man with all the refinement of Horace never dreamt of regarding slaves as other than mere chattels; the highest Roman ladies gazed with eager and unpitying enjoyment on the hideous spectacles of the Coliseum. Nor was the stern morality of Juvenal shocked at the gladiatorial shows, but only at the nobles taking part in them. No public sentiment of Rome was outraged when 20,000 slaves were killed in a mock sea-fight for a summer afternoon's pastime to the spectators. But I need not multiply illustrations of what will be readily admitted.

Now it is clearly a fact, that in these and such like matters the common feeling and practice of Christendom is a marked improvement on that of preceding ages. Cruelties no doubt, both public and private, have been perpetrated in Christian countries, some of a kind the heathen never dreamed of. Still it remains true, that the average standard, whether national or individual, is not what it was then. No one questions, for instance, that the influence of the Church contributed in the long run to the abolition of slavery, and softened the horrors of war. Care for the sick and poor was from the beginning a noticeable speciality of Christians; hospitals, as has been observed, were first erected in Christian cities. It is surely no mere fancy to connect the changed temper of modern society with the great event which has engaged our attention in this volume. There is a sequence of causation, as well as of chronology. An Order was founded by St. Camillus of Lelli in the sixteenth century, under the name of *Cruciferi*, for attending those afflicted with incurable diseases, or at the point of death. May we not say, that all who represent the more tender and compassionate spirit of Christian civilization are so far, in their measure, bearers of the Cross?

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